'Stop focusing on IPI faults; it paid $204M in 4 years' PAGE 2
Villagomez: Guam vulnerability is still concerning' PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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WITH NEW GUIDELINES FOR PUA/FPUC

PUA eligibility is expanded

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

More workers are now eligible to apply for PUA, or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration updated last Friday its requirements for eligibility for both PUA and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, this time adding three COVID-19

See PUA on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 8pm, Feb. 28, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,730	5	7,735
Recovered	7,559	5	7,564
Active	36	5	41
Deaths	130	1	131
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			126,141

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	143	0	143
Traced via Travel Screening	117	0	117
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			193

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 9,579	Dose 1: 373	Dose 1: 523
Dose 2: 7,134	Dose 2: 137	Dose 2: 170

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

J&J's 1-dose shot cleared, giving US 3rd COVID-19 vaccine

By LAURAN NEERGAARD and MATTHEW PERRONE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. is getting a third vaccine to prevent COVID-19, as the Food and Drug Administration on Saturday cleared a Johnson & Johnson shot that works with just one dose instead of two.

Health experts are anxious-

See VACCINE on Page 4

500TH ANNIVERSARY

The Spanish Navy training ship *Juan Sebastian de Elcano* arrives at Apra Harbor at U.S. Naval Base Guam last Feb. 26, Friday, in a voyage that commemorates the 500th anniversary of the Magellan-Elcano voyage around the world. The expedition saw the ships voyaging across the Atlantic to Argentina, through the Straits of Magellan, and across the Pacific Ocean, passing Guam and the Philippines on their way back to the Spanish port of Cádiz. Magellan arrived in Guam on March 6, 1521, as part of the Spanish expedition organized in an effort to find a sea route to the East Indies. Magellan was killed in the Battle of Mactan in the Philippine in 1521. The voyage was completed by Spanish explorer Juan Sebastian Elcano, the ship's namesake. The four-masted *Elcano* is a training ship used for Spanish midshipmen. It is the third-largest tall ship in the world and was built in 1927.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CUC extends Aggreko deal to mid-2021

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has extended its original 90-day temporary power supply agreement with Aggreko to mid-2021.

According to executive director Gary P. Camacho, overhaul work on CUC's two power engines are continuing, hence the need

See CUC on Page 4

Camacho

Camacho is CUC chief for 2 more years

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors unanimously voted last Friday to extend the employment contract of CUC executive director Gary Camacho for another two years.

CUC board chair Miranda Manglona said that they discussed Camacho's performance in the last two years and came to a unanimous deci-

See CAMACHO on Page 4

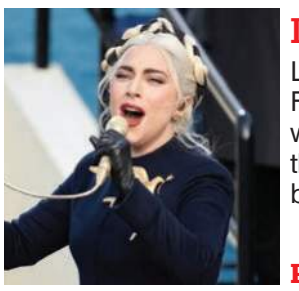
INSIDE

BUSINESS
Edwin Sta. Theresa's Coffee & Bread in San Jose serves customers breakfast only starting at 5am.

PAGE 11

NATION
Investigators probing the death of a U.S. Capitol officer killed in the Jan. 6 riot now have a suspect.

PAGE 12



LIFE & STYLE
Lady Gaga's two French bulldogs, which were stolen by thieves, have now been recovered.

PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

‘Stop focusing on IPI faults; it paid $204M in 4 years’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) has asked senators to not just focus on the faults of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, reminding them that IPI paid a total of $204.80 million in taxes, license, and fees from 2015 to 2018.

At a Senate session last Thursday, Hofschneider pointed out that the $204,804,991 that IPI paid out are the audited numbers generated from IPI’s integrated casino in that four-year period.

The Senate president also reminded senators that it was IPI’s contributions that saved the CNMI’s Retirement Fund from collapsing, after Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) brought up the importance of the Development Plan Advisory Committee, which was created under the casino license agreement to oversee the construction and completion of the initial gaming facility and phase 1 of IPI’s integrated resort.

“I’m not saying that we’re wrong,” Hofschneider said, adding he’s just reminding lawmakers that every time they try to point out the ills of the casino industry, they all should be reminded that without these millions of dollars generated from IPI, the CNMI government will never retire or fulfill its obligation to retirees.

» **Hofschneider reminds senators that IPI saved Retirement Fund’s demise, many of CNMI’s financial obligations**

» **Manglona reiterates DPAC is the right way**

The Senate president asked the senators for recommendations and come up with revenue-generating legislations and other legislations to allow more efficiency on government service so they can work with colleagues from the House of Representatives to push things forward.

Hofschneider said that IPI paid $16,280,630 in licenses and fees in 2015; $35,601,247 in taxes and $15,934,433 in license and fees in 2016; $70,483,539 in taxes, and $16,244,382 in license and fees in 2017; and $46,349,751 in taxes and approximately $3.911 million in licenses and fees in 2018.

However, in order for the people to accept any amendment to the casino license agreement, there is a need to be open and transparent to the public, Manglona said

The senator underscored the importance to have these public hearings, to have a discussion where everyone sits around the table with a professional or an expert on casino gaming. “I believe nobody in this room is in any position to make a wise and informed decision. We have to give it to the experts,” Manglona said.

He noted that a DPAC report in January 2018 specifically states that they actually intended to create a committee consisting of experts with experience of 30 to 40 years and legal counsel with similar experience. “And that’s what we need to do. I don’t think it is right that we go piecemeal by piecemeal and not bring all the issues on the table so that we can discuss it,” he said.

Manglona said he wants to help IPI, but the company needs to be upfront. “Why is it that when I wrote a letter to the Office of the Public Auditor last year to conduct an audit of the casino benefit fund, they will not open their

See STOP on Page 3

NMI Model United Nations fight zombies

By NEIL FAMA
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REPORTER

The NMI Model United Nations hosted a virtual MUN conference last week in preparation for the regional Northern Marianas Island MUN Conference, which will be held this week on March 1 and 2.

Students from high school and middle school island wide participated in the virtual MUN conference, with Saipan International School and Grace Christian Academy students participated for the high schools and Seventh Day Adventist, Saipan International School, and Grace Christian Academy students participating for middle school.

In last week’s conference, the students participated in a mock plague similar to the zombie movie *World War Z*, where the students had to work together on solving the plague, similar to the set-up and purpose of Model United Nations, where students play the role of delegates from different countries and attempt to solve real world issues with the policies and perspectives of their assigned country.

During the conference, each student was given specific roles which were based on characters from the movie. One example was taking the traits of the character named Adm. Xu Zhi Cai, who, in the movie, had the powers over the military. Another character, Dr. Fernando Oliveria, had the most knowledge in the vaccines, which played a key part in the movie. Each student then had to use the traits of the characters they were given and cooperate with other delegates in order to come up with a solution to stop the spread of the zombies and the virus itself.

This is less formal style committees of Model United Nations are called “crisis” committees, in which the students are given fictional or nonfictional characters as their roles instead of countries. The purpose of these committees is to add a little more fun to the debates for delegates but also allows them to develop their skills in creativity, impromptu, and public speaking.

“I wanted to give the students a more fun and easy way to approach Model United Nations by incorporating popular media and the skills needed for debating, and I am glad it turned out well,” said NMI Model United Nations president Eileen No.

Villagomez: Guam vulnerability is still concerning'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force is very proactive on the Rota border because of the island's proximity to Guam, where the pandemic's vulnerability level is still very concerning to the task force.

In his presentation before the House of Representatives Committee on Health and Welfare at the House chamber last Friday, Governor's COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren Villagomez said the elevated border watch on Rota is meant to protect the people of the island from being exposed to the high COVID-19 population in Guam.

"We as a team decided to continue with all the protective measures and enforcement," he said, acknowledging that there are many inconvenience and concerns in the community about commerce, food security, and other things. But, at the same time, he said, there is nothing more valuable than human lives, so the efforts to save lives will continue.

So far, there have been 131 COVID-19-related deaths in Guam, compared to the two posted in the CNMI, and 7,736 reported COVID-19 cases in Guam, compared to the CNMI's 143. It must be noted, though, that the number of positive cases in Guam has now steeply dropped to single digits. For example, only one new case of COVID-19 was identified out of 111 tests performed last Saturday, Feb. 27.

» COVID-19 Task Force very proactive on Rota border

As of last Thursday, Villagomez said, there were 10,375 people vaccinated in the CNMI for Dose 1 and 7,441 for Dose 2, or for a total of 17,816.

For the Phase 1A and Phase 1B vaccination rollout, 16,613 have been vaccinated on Saipan, 510 on Tinian, and 693 on Rota, Villagomez said.

Villagomez said coordination between the task force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has been seamless on all levels.

He said Alternate Care Site resources that they have at the Kanoa Resort are being coordinated and utilized by CHCC at the moment. "So there are beds in there that are over at CHCC. …Dialysis machines are being tested as well on whether there's enhancements and improvements that could be made at CHCC," the chairman said.

He assured that all their daily efforts are coordinated with CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña and her team, as well as with the Governor's Office, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Department of Public Safety, Commonwealth Office of Transportation Authority, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, and Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The governor's authorized representative Patrick Guerrero assured that he is also making sure that all expenditures are within the allowable limits of Federal Emergency Management Agency reimbursement.

The meeting was presided over by committee chair Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan). Also at the meeting were Guerrero, Muna, press secretary Kevin Bautista, and CHCC chief operations officer Subroto Banerji.

STOP

From Page 2

books?" he asked.

For one, what is there to hide, Manglona asked, when the community benefit fund requirement is clear in the casino license agreement. "They don't even want to show that. And so this is something what we all need to bring to the table," he said.

Hofschneider said that Manglona's message is well taken and they understand there's a multitude of problems that the casino industry is faced with, but the Senate should offer solutions for what they can do.

"I'm simply saying that if they need to trim down, then let's sit down and talk to them," he said.

The president said he does not want to continue the discussion until they get more information on IPI's requested items.

The Senate president reminded the senators that when IPI and the government first signed the casino license agreement, the CNMI was retiring a lot of its obligations in the community.

"We were accepting of the fact they're [going to] help the CNMI. …Let's try and pitch in our efforts to help this casino industry," he said, adding that IPI's contributions averted the demise of the Retirement Fund. "Let's not deny that. Everyone should remember that," he said. "To this day, we're paying the Retirement Funds 25% obligation of the CNMI government absent the $15 million, absent the revenue that's coming in from the casino as intended."

He said IPI is responsible for the many challenges it has been facing but the enactment of law that empowers the Commonwealth Casino Commission to have more enforcement teeth is indicative of what the Senate is trying to do to give the commission more authority to address these concerns.

"So we're moving ahead as members of this Legislature. It's not like we're not doing anything," he said.

Manglona said he cannot overemphasize again the need to read the DPAC report. "That's my point today. It's from professionals, from experts in the casino industry. We're just putting it on the side [but] we need the guidance and the advice of professionals," he said.

Manglona agreed with Hofschneider that the casino legislation was passed primarily to benefit the retirees.

"And for that reason, we need to do everything we can to solve this but, at the same time, we need to do it right," the senator said, adding that DPAC is the right way.

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CNMI DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The CNMI Department of Commerce, Central Statistics Division is now conducting the CNMI 2021 Prevailing Wage Study (PWS) survey and notifies all businesses and employers in the CNMI to log on to the CSD Data Collection Portal and complete the PWS survey questionnaire.

All private businesses, public agencies, and organizations in the CNMI, with and without employees, are urged to participate in the 2021 PWS survey.

The survey data collection period will begin on March 1, 2021, and end on March 31, 2021.

Data Collection Portal Link: https://cnmidata.commerce.gov.mp/

UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 1st Quarter General Membership Meeting on March 2, 2021 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency, Saipan – Giovanni's.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review & Adoption of Agenda of March 2, 2021
IV. Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2021
V. Reports
  a. Chairperson
  b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
  c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
  d. Executive Director
VI. Action Items
  a. Ratify the Approval of the Proposed FY 2021 DD Basic Grant Budget
  b. Ratify the Approval of the Proposed FY 2021 Assistive Technology Grant Budget
  c. Ratify the Approval of the Amended FY 2020 DD Basic Grant Budget
  d. Review & Approve the Proposed FY 2022 Local Budget Submission
  e. Ratify the Approval of FY 2020 CDD Annual Report
VII. Old Business
  a. DD Basic Grant State Plan Survey Update
  b. March 2021 – DD Awareness Month Update
  c. Disability Awareness Campaign Update
VIII. New Business
  a. Center for Living Independently Workshop
  b. Disability Network Partners (DNP) Conference
  c. DD Council Website Redesign
  d. 1021 Champions of Equal Opportunities Award Ceremony
IX. Miscellaneous
X. Next Meeting
XI. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Jan Barcinas
Chairperson

This ad was paid for by funds from the DD Basic Grant Part A (Administrative)

Atalig: Of $36M CARES Act funding, less than $10K left

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig said Tuesday that most of the $36 million the CNMI received under the first Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) has been expended.

Testifying before the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means chaired by Rep. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), Atalig said the balance on that fund is less than $10,000.

"There's probably some expenditures or encumbrances that probably could be liquidated. But generally speaking, the first CARES Act funds—the $36 million–we've received has been expended," said Atalig in response to Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan).

Atalig said the Torres administration pretty much followed a plan on how to allocate the funds, but made adjustments to help out Rota, Tinian, the Judiciary, as well as the Legislature, with their funding needs related to COVID-19 response.

He said the pandemic was different as it's not like a natural disaster that the Federal Emergency Management Agency was used to working on.

"A lot of things that dealt with the pandemic and COVID-19 and expenditures were pretty new in terms of what is allowable, not allowable," Atalig said. "So at times, when we didn't know what the answer was, we used the CARES Act money to respond to whatever COVID and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña recommended that we do," he said.

Atalig said a lot of expenditures for COVID-19 was driven by the recommendation of Muña and her team and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

"And so when they shared with us their plans and how we can get through this, we just kind of listened and went with it," he said.

IPI not opposed to Tang as receiver

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC does not oppose the U.S. Department of Labor's nomination of Joyce Tang as receiver if ever the Saipan casino licensee goes into receivership.

IPI, through counsel Michael W. Dotts, said in a filing with the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Friday that it doesn't oppose the nomination of Tang to serve as the receiver for IPI and the proposed terms of the receivership.

A receivership, in law, means that the court will appoint a person, a "receiver," to gather assets. In this case, with IPI, the receiver will gather and liquidate assets to satisfy the consent judgment against them that was filed by USDOL.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, USDOL attorney Charles Song, following the court's Jan. 28 order to nominate a receiver, submitted Tang as the proposed receiver and proposed that the receivership be limited to the liquidation of assets sufficient to remove contempt and pay the receiver's fees and costs.

The receivership is needed because IPI was anticipating that the crane funds will satisfy the judgment. However, the crane funds are not available. IPI informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI that the crane funds they were dependent on will not be released by today's deadline, March 1.

In a status report filed by Dotts, the removal of the crane has been completed. However, Finance Secretary David Atalig declared the CNMI's claim on all of the funds on deposit related to the crane and advised that he will be moving to intervene.

PUA

From Page 1

related reasons under which an individual may now self-certify as being eligible for PUA. They are:

1. Individuals who refuse to return to work that is unsafe or to accept an offer of new work that is unsafe

2. Certain individuals providing services to educational institutions or education service agencies, and

3. Individuals experiencing a reduction of hours or a temporary or permanent layoff.

Previous guidance from USDOL had denied an individual (furloughed, laid off, or on reduced hours) from claiming PUA benefits if his/her place of employment was still open. Thus, if an employee who was furloughed, laid off or on reduced work hours, he or she may only qualify if his place of employment was totally shutdown.

Under the new guidance, if an individual has been furloughed or laid off because the place of employment is partially closed (either permanently or temporarily) or the individual has experienced a reduction in hours, the individual may now self-certify eligibility.

CNMI Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente received an email early Friday morning, clarifying that those in the CNMI who are working on reduced hours or furloughed due to the COVID-19 pandemic are now eligible for the second round of PUA.

She welcomed the news and estimates that 3,000 more individuals will be able to avail of the program.

Benavente also confirmed that the CNMI has received $277 million for the next round of PUA/FPUC. The CNMI is expected to receive these funds in the next couple of days.

"Yesterday morning [Feb. 25], we received word from the USDOL that the CNMI was granted additional $277 million in PUA/FPUC funds. This is to assist with the continuation for Round 1 and also for the extension of PUA in the CNMI for the next 11 weeks," said Benavente.

According to Bautista, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres had written acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Al Stewart that the previous guidance was "disheartening" for many CNMI residents who are relying on public benefits. He extended his appreciation to USDOL for making the much-needed change.

"This is great news for the CNMI, after we continued to advocate directly to USDOL for reconsideration of their guidance. Many of our residents have been directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the unprecedented economic situation. We are thankful that our federal partners have updated their guidance to ensure that this much-needed assistance can continue to help our affected families as we continue to do our part to bring back tourism and rebuild our economy," said Torres.

Kilili thanks Biden administration

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) separately thanked the administration of President Joseph R. Biden for issuing the new guidance over the weekend, reversing a decision by the Trump administration to cut off CNMI government employees and some private sector workers from the federal unemployment aid

In his e-kilili newsletter, Sablan said the new guidance means that Marianas workers who had their hours reduced or were furloughed while their place of employment stayed open will now be able to collect PUS/FPUC.

The delegate disclosed that he wrote Biden, along with Guam Delegate Michael F.Q. San Nicolas and 11 other Democratic colleagues, the day after Biden's inauguration, asking for a review of the Trump policy that they describe as "harmful."

Sablan said the "Marianas expansion," as the Congressional Research Service is referring to this new interpretation of a Section of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act allows any individual who previously filed a PUA/PFUC claim and was denied for any week to be given the opportunity to self-certify eligibility under the updated eligibility criteria and receive unemployment aid retroactively.

Sablan said according to the U.S. Department of Labor, 18,685 PUA and PFUC applications are still waiting to be processed by the Commonwealth as of Feb. 13.

He said these latest numbers are an increase from the 18,608 applications that were reported pending as of Dec. 12.

The delegate said U.S. Labor told the congressional office that as many as 18,002 applications, however, may be fraudulent.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, individuals who can apply for PUA are U.S. nationals and qualified aliens who reside and work in the CNMI who have had a week(s) of full or partial unemployment on or after Dec. 27, 2020, through March 13, 2021, as a result of COVID-19. This also includes foreign workers in the CNMI, called CWs. ***(With reports from Ferdie De La Torre)***

VACCINE

From Page 1

ly awaiting a one-and-done option to help speed vaccinations, as they race against a virus that already has killed more than 510,000 people in the U.S. and is mutating in increasingly worrisome ways.

The FDA said J&J's vaccine offers strong protection against what matters most: serious illness, hospitalizations and death. One dose was 85% protective against the most severe COVID-19 illness, in a massive study that spanned three continents—protection that remained strong even in countries such as South Africa, where the variants of most concern are spreading.

"This is really good news," Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, told The Associated Press Saturday. "The most important thing we can do right now is to get as many shots in as many arms as we can."

J&J initially is providing a few million doses and shipments to states could begin as early as Monday. By the end of March, J&J has said it expects to deliver 20 million doses to the U.S., and 100 million by summer.

J&J also is seeking authorization for emergency use of its vaccine in Europe and from the World Health Organization. The company aims to produce about 1 billion doses globally by the end of the year. On Thursday, the island nation of Bahrain became the first to clear its use.

"This is exciting news for all Americans, and an encouraging development in our efforts to bring an end to the crisis," President Joe Biden said in a statement. "But I want to be clear: this fight is far from over," he added, encouraging people to stick with masks and other public health measures.

CUC

From Page 1

for Aggreko's supplemental power. Aggreko's engines provide CUC 12 megawatts of power.

"With large engines down like this, we need supplemental supply and Aggreko is in for that. The overhaul is continuing and when the overhauls are completed…they'll [the generator engines] be turned back on and then we should not have a need for Aggreko," said Camacho.

On average the CNMI needs 33 megawatts on average. The power need fluctuates, depending on the weather, but Camacho said that 33 megawatts is the average.

Camacho said the overhaul and repair CUC's generator engines is estimated to end by the end of June or mid-July, or whenever the engine manufacturer, Man B&W Diesel Singapore, completes the overhaul and repair.

"We determined how long the extension is going to be…because we didn't want to commit to a long-term commitment in the event that we didn't need it for that period of time," he said.

There were also complications due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and one of them was that CUC had to defer projects due to funding problems, but now CUC was able to pick up some of the projects. Also, it has been hard to get parts shipped from Singapore and Germany due to the pandemic, he added.

"They [engine parts] have to be manufactured and that's taking time. Along with the pandemic, it's causing an issue in shipping. …These parts are coming from Singapore and Germany. It's having a huge impact on the supplier's ability to provide the needed parts in a timely manner so again we're stuck with the situation now," said Camacho.

Even with these unforeseen issues, Camacho assures that CUC's Power Generation Division is working diligently with the generator's overhaul.

CUC first extended its contract with Aggreko in January 2020. That was for a 90-day extension to the original 90-day contract for Aggreko to provide temporary power while CUC's generator engines are being overhauled and repaired.

Camacho earlier estimated that the additional 90 days may cost CUC about $1.3 million more to pay Aggreko. This is on top of the original $1.5 million that has already been approved for the project. He declined to cite a specific cost of the new contract extension.

CAMACHO

From Page 1

sion at the board meeting to keep him on board.

"Each [board member] was given the opportunity to address [Camacho's] performance. …Each director has their own opinion, his or her feeling…[and] it all had to do with his performance," said Manglona.

She said that Camacho's performance when dealing with the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, Super Typhoon Yutu, and Typhoon Soudelor has proven to the board that is fit for the job.

"He never underestimates them. He always makes sure that it's a priority to the community that services are not cut off, that the community is the No. 1 priority for the corporation, and the services that we continue to provide are there," said Manglona.

In a separate interview with Camacho, he said he is appreciative of the board's support. "First of all, I appreciate the support from the board… it's wonderful. We've done a lot of things over the last few years, consistent with the 24-hour water. …We continue to become better [and] we continue to replace or repair our infrastructure," said Camacho.

According to him, there are many things to look forward to this year, including their master plan and upgrading CUC's policies.

"There's a lot of work right now, and I greatly appreciate all the support from the board members and the support from our community. It's a very difficult time but I've got a great staff," he said.

Camacho describes his staff as the "best group of people" anybody can work with—professional, hardworking, and committed to assisting and helping the community.

Camacho said that there's no place he'd rather be than with the CUC.

NMI and Guam collaborate on consumer protection outreach

TAMUNING, Guam—To kick off National Consumer Protection Week (Feb. 28 - March 5, 2021) attorneys general Edward Manibusan (CNMI) and Leevin T. Camacho (Guam) announced last Friday the collaboration between their offices to spread awareness on topics and laws that affect consumers throughout the Marianas.

"We are excited for this important public awareness and outreach campaign aimed at protecting our consumers in the CNMI and Guam," Manibusan said. "We are grateful for this opportunity to collaborate and work with the Guam Office of the Attorney General, which will strengthen our efforts in combating violations of the Consumer Protection Act on our islands."

Manibusan and Camacho also reaffirmed their commitment to a cooperative effort where both offices work jointly on consumer-related investigations and issues of reported products and services purchased on Guam and sold in the CNMI, and vice versa. Historically, there have been purported regional price-gouging and inflation claims, as well as cases where businesses have misled consumers about the quality of product being sold.

This collaboration joins a growing list of initiatives between the CNMI and Guam such as the joint petition seeking High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area designations under the Hawaii HIDTA.

"Whether it's protecting island consumers, preventing the importation of drugs, or seeking additional resources to combat the drug crisis affecting our islands, Guam and the NMI are stronger when we are unified in intention and action," said Camacho.

The CNMI Office of the Consumer Counsel is led by assistant attorney general Abbi Novotny and deputy attorney general Fred Nishihira leads the Guam Consumer Protection Division. ***(PR)***

USDOL awards $1.7M to Guam to support jobs amid the pandemic

The U.S. Department of Labor announced Friday additional funding of $1,767,172 to the Government of Guam's Department of Administration to respond to the workforce needs resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

Administered by the department's Employment and Training Administration, the grant award allows participants to continue disaster-relief employment in positions addressing pandemic cleanup and humanitarian activities, as well as assisting in the delivery of employment and training services to eligible individuals.

Emergency declarations issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency enable Guam to request this funding.

Supported by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Dislocated Worker Grants temporarily expand the service capacity of dislocated worker programs at the state and local levels by providing funding assistance in response to large, unexpected economic events that cause significant job losses. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
CUC-RAES-21-010

A&E Design Services for the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Upgrade (S18-065a)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Design Services of the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade in Agingan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAES package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal and One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal in a separate envelope must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RAES-21-010, A&E Design Services for Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 11, 2021. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 22, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org; Westen Knudsen, Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Administrative Technician Senior – via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-017

CNMI STREETLIGHT EFFICIENCY PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of Light Emitting Diode (LED) streetlight luminaires to promote energy and cost saving measures on the power distribution system in Saipan and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded from the United states Department of the Interior (USDOIA).

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-21-017, CNMI Streetlight Efficiency Project)"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 4, 2021** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) of the total bid price shall accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on February 10, 2021** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Adrian Reyes, CUC Power Division Engineer via email adrian.reyes@cucgov.org; Alfred Palattao, CUC Power Division Engineer via email alfred.palattao@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Technician Senior via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any non-material imperfection in the bid proposal if in its sole opinion to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-020

Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of; installation of sludge dewatering equipment including the screw press skid (OFCI) for full function. The work shall include; selective demolition of existing improvements, the installation of sludge dewatering units (OFCI), shaftless auger conveyor (OFCI), installation of pressure pumps, installation of water storage tanks, and rehabilitation and modification of existing improvements, along with other miscellaneous features, for one unit at Sadog Tasi Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and one unit at Agingan WWTP. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi WWTP and Agingan WWTP. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 180 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, oeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$100.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 9, 2021 at 10:00 AM** (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-21-020, Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 29, 2021, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the Unites States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A *Payment Bond* of one Hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2021 to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Westen Knudsen, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and to Marcela Tenorio, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician - marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

4 MOS staff complete AutoCAD LT software training

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

From left, Jordan Mendiola of H.K. Pangelinan and Associates, LLC; Henry Pangelinan Jr., president of H.K. Pangelinan and Associates, LLC; Saipan Mayor's Office's Saipan street naming and addressing division team members Jaycee Rdialul, Janice Celis, Zakariahs Reyes, and Mary Becky Repeki; Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, and Henry S. Hofschneider, special assistant to the Mayor, pose after they got their certificates after completing the AutoCAD LT software training.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Four of the Saipan Mayor's Office staff completed four days of hands-on training in the operation of AutoCAD LT software, which will help them to independently implement the Saipan master map without the assistance of the contractor that developed the map.

The four staff include Janice Celis, Jaycee Rdialul, Mary Becky Repeki, and Zakariahs Reyes, who are all under the Saipan street naming and addressing division. According to Saipan Mayor's Office's Yuki Kishimoto, the engineering firm H.K. Pangelinan and Associates, LLC provided the three-week training.

According to Henry K. Pangelinan, president of the engineering firm, the Saipan Mayor's Office staff are now capable of using AutoCAD for purposes of updating the master map, locating streets, generating street address numbers for newly identified and named streets, verifying address numbers, and more.

Kishimoto said that Jordan Mendiola of the engineering firm conducted the training. According to Mendiola, the trainees were quick learners who—through observation—enjoyed every minute of their four-day training.

Kishimoto said the staff greatly appreciates the opportunity that Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang provided to get them trained to improve their skills. She added that the staff feel confident that they have the skills to assure accurate implementation of the master map. The master map of Saipan was developed to guide the Saipan Mayor's Office with its house numbering project.

For his part, Apatang said that this is a milestone in their effort to increase competence in how his office will deliver services to the public.

"I am very proud of their accomplishments. …Our staff dedicated three consecutive weeks, four days a week, eight hours each day to gain the necessary skills to operate the version of AutoCAD software that our contractor used to develop the Saipan street naming and addressing master map," said Apatang.

He said that staff training will continue within the year and beyond as the Saipan Mayor's Office shift to developing its Global Information System mapping database system, which will be the ultimate application for the street naming and addressing master map.

"While this AutoCAD training is over, my street naming and addressing division staff are currently being trained on the operation of GIS mapping application for two hours a week," said Apatang.

DCCA-CCDF unveils System of Support for Rota licensed child-care providers

The CNMI Child Care and Development Fund under the CNMI Department of Community and Cultural Affairs launched the Rota System of Support for Licensed Exempt Family, Friends, or Neighbors, or LEFFN, providers by hosting a symposium on Feb. 4-10, 2021.

The event kicked off with a public orientation, held at the Sinapalo Youth Center, where participants learned about home-based care options for children, ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Providers were treated to materials to ensure the health and safety of children in their care.

DCCA Secretary Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero and CCDF program administrator Maribel Loste distributed materials, such as cleaning supplies, safety materials (e.g. fire extinguishers and smoke alarms), and educational toys. Generators were also awarded to three providers whose child care services were disrupted by Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu. The generators were funded through the Office of Child Care Disaster Funds.

The Rota symposium featured three days of training. Kevin Castro and Erlaine Evangelista, specialists at DICE Pacific Professional Solutions, facilitated trainings on child development, administration of medication, recognizing and preventing child abuse, and other health and safety topics. Maureen Sebangiol, RRT, led the certification training on Pediatric CPR and First Aid. Team members, along with Jonavan Lizama, vice chairman of the Rota Municipal Council, also participated in "CCDF Shakers," an exercise activity to promote health and wellness.

The Child Care and Development Fund assists low income families in accessing quality child care while parents work, participate in education, and/ or job training. The program's mission is to enhance the quality, affordability, and availability of child care services.

To learn more about the CCDF program and how to become eligible as a family, contact Genevieve Guerrero or Joella Rosario at 664-2576. Additional information and forms are also available by visiting the cnmicclp.gov.mp. website.

If you are interested in applying to become a Licensed-Exempt Family, Friend, or Neighbor child care provider or would like to know more about the System of Support initiative, contact Kevin Castro at 285-1381 or kevincastro.faces@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Three providers whose child care business were impacted by Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu received generators, funded through the Office of Child Care Disaster Funds. In photo, left to right, are Rota governor's representative Joaquina L. King, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig, LE FFN provider Joann M. San Nicolas, Rota Department of Community and Cultural Affairs resident director Dwayne L. Maratita, DCCA Secretary Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero, and CCDF program administrator Maribel Loste.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Materials, including cleaning supplies, developmentally-appropriate toys, safety materials, and school supplies were distributed to the Rota LE FFN providers. Pictured here, left to right, are Rota Department of Community and Cultural Affairs resident director Dwayne L. Maratita, Rota governor's representative Joaquina L. King, LE FFN provider Mary G. Manglona, and Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig .

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CCDF introduced the new System of Support initiative for potential and current License-Exempt Family, Friends, or Neighbors child care providers on Rota. In photo are Jonavan H. Lizama, vice chair of the 18th Rota Municipal Council; CCDF Shakers facilitator Kazu Saishu, DICE Pacific Professional Solutions family specialist Kevin Castro, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs resident director Dwayne L. Maratita, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig, CCDF accountant Roselle Teregeyo, CCDF program administrator Maribel Loste, DCCA Secretary Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero, and DICE technical assistance specialist Erlaine Evangelista.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NPS now refining management concepts for Rota

The National Park Service is now reviewing the comments they received in the meetings and comment period for the Rota Special Resource Study in the fall of 2020.

In a mass email, NPS said they are now going over all the public comments in order to improve the accuracy of the preliminary findings and further refine the management concepts for the plan to have NPS manage the unique natural and cultural resources of Rota.

As directed by the U.S. Congress, at the request of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), NPS looking at the suitability and feasibility of designating the area as a unit of the national park system.

In mid-September 2020, NPS held public and agency meetings to present the preliminary study findings and alternative concepts. Representatives from the CNMI governor's office, legislature, and agencies, and the Rota Mayor's Office participated in agency meetings. Approximately 100 people attended the online public meetings. The CNMI Indigenous Affairs Office also arranged meetings on Rota that were held in person and online. Another 50 written comments were received through the project website and email.

Some of the types of comments received:

■ People overwhelmingly agree that the Chamorro sites are special, significant, and should be protected.

■ There is a strong desire to protect the livelihoods of Rota's people today and for future generations, which includes continued subsistence and traditional and cultural uses.

■ Most people in the CNMI and Rota want to make sure they have a say in the process and decision-making related to a potential national park unit designation of their lands and heritage.

■ There are concerns and questions about what federal laws, policies, and regulations would come with a national park unit designation.

■ Some people think the areas suggested for a national historical park, national monument, or national preserve encompass too much of Rota's lands.

■ Of those people who stated a preference for a management concept, most prefer either no action or a limited national park unit designation, with some additional conditions.

■ Many people prefer strong local involvement or less extensive federal involvement.

■ There were many inquiries about cooperative management-what would be the roles and responsibilities of local people, CNMI and Rota governments, and the federal government? How would cooperative management work?

■ Commenters are interested in understanding the impacts of a national park designation on the local economy.

■ There is concern about the accuracy of land ownership data and boundaries.

■ Some people want more information and engagement related to the study to ensure that the study is credible and that the recommendations are well-informed.

"NPS would like to thank everyone who participated We greatly appreciate your time in sharing your opinions, concerns, and ideas with us. … Thank you for the time you have spent engaging in this study and sharing your thoughts with us. The island of Rota is truly a very special place," said the NPS mass email.

For more information, visit the Rota Special Resource Study website to stay up-to-date on the study. Recordings of the public meetings, frequently asked questions, Newsletter #2, and the presentation used during the public meetings are all available at https://parkplanning.nps.gov/rotastudy. ***(PR)***

FOMT welcome chance to comment on draft plan for trench monument

The Friends of the Mariana Trench, a local organization dedicated to the conservation, preservation, and protection of flora, fauna, and geological features of the ocean, welcome the opportunity to comment on the draft management plan for the Mariana Trench Marine National Monument.

"Our islands, our ocean, and our culture are the tangible things we pass on to future generations," said Rep. Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan), who is the FOM chairwoman. "Community engagement and local input will improve our stewardship of the Mariana Trench, and our organization is committed to working with our partners in local and federal government to ensure our voices are heard."

The draft management plan and environmental assessment for the Mariana Trench Marine National Monument was made available for public comment on Feb. 24, 2021. The 90-day comment period ends on May 25, 2021.

"We are the long-time stewards and owners of the Mariana Trench," said Friends vice chair Franco Santos. "We commend the work of the agency staff at CNMI Department of Land and Natural Resources, NOAA Fisheries, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for giving the community the opportunity to have a voice in the management of our natural resources."

The Friends of the Mariana Trench plan to provide expert commentary on the draft management plan and work with community members who wish to learn about and comment on the plan.

"We also plan to help community members submit their own comments, so that their individual voices are heard as a part of this process," added Babauta.

For more information, https://www.friendsmarianatrench.org/. ***(PR)***

MCS opens early bird registration for SY 2021-2022

Mount Carmel School recently announced open registration for its "Early Bird Special" for the 2021-2022 school year. The Early Bird Special provides a variety of discounts for families looking to secure their child's enrollment for the upcoming school year.

The annual early bird registration discount is as follows: For grades K4 - K5 registration is $50 per student, which is normally $100. For students in grades first through twelfth, the registration fee is $100 per student, which is normally $400. The deadline for the Early Bird registration and fees is scheduled for May 1, 2021.

Application forms for academic and extracurricular scholarships will be made available online and will be announced on all of Mount Carmel School's media outlets.

The school will also continue discounts for families that enroll more than one child. Families with two children can avail of a $600 discount for the second child, families with three children can avail of a $1,000 discount for the third child, and families with four children can avail of a $1,500 discount for the fourth child.

Additionally, the school's leadership team will be exploring ways to expand scholarship funding and financial aid. This may include earmarking a portion of all Education Tax Credit revenue towards the school's scholarship and financial aid program.

"We know that these are challenging times for our families and we want to help," said school president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero. "In addition to our academic and extracurricular scholarship opportunities, our team at MCS is continuously working hard to establish new means of providing more financial aid opportunities for its students." ***(PR)***

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Oram Co., a CNMI Corporation was dissolved on March 14, 2020. Creditor and person with an outstanding claim against the Company is requested to notify the corporate office as soon as possible.

Oram Co.
PMB 768, Box 10000,
Saipan, MP 96950

FOR SHORT OR LONG TERM LEASE

Five (5) lots or more containing an area of 1,016 square meters each within Subdivision Survey Plat of Lot 514 NEW-3-R1, located in Fina Sisu, Saipan.

Serious inquiries only. Email to galu4258@yahoo.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Accountant – DW2021-01
Saipan, CNMI

Accountant, D & W SAIPAN, INC., Saipan, CNMI

Overall in-charge on the accounting and administrative operation of the company. Report to the management regarding the finances of the company. Prepare and analyze accounting records, financial statements, or other financial report to assess accuracy, completeness and in conformity to reporting and procedural US GAAP standards. Analyze business operations, trends, cost, revenue, financial commitments, and obligation to project future revenues and expenses. Compute the taxes owed and prepare tax returns such as CNMI business gross revenue tax, CNMI Quarterly Withholding, Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return (941-SS) and Corporate Income Tax Return (1120-CM), ensuring compliance with payment, reporting or other requirements.

Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree in Business, Accounting, Finance, or related field, foreign educational equivalent accepted, plus 12 months experience in general accounting functions. Able to supervise accounting and administrative staff.

Salary: $ 14.85/hour

Workplace: CHALAN PALE ARNOLD MIDDLE ROAD, HIGHWAY EXPRESS BUILDING Saipan, CNMI

To apply: Please send your resume to D & W Saipan, Inc., PO BOX 500440, Saipan, MP 96950 or e-mail to dwsaipan@pticom.com Job Number – **DW2021-01**

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE ESTATE OF RITA KAIPAT,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 90-0840 [PROPOSED] ORDER AFTER HEARING

This matter came before the Court on February 9, 2021 at 9:00 am. Attorney Colin M. Thompson appeared on behalf of Administratrix Catalina Tebit and Attorney Janet H. King appeared on behalf of the *Estate of Carmen R. Guelles*. Attorney Thompson reported that at this time, Decedent's property interest cannot be determined by the title company and there are other individuals claiming ownership for Lot 1772New-2, Lot 1772 and E.A. 297. The Court finds that In rem jurisdiction is proper and that Lot 1772New-2, Lot 1772 and E.A. 297 is property over which this Court must resolve and oversee the "disposition of property." *In Re The Matter of the Estate of Hillblom*, 2011 MP 5 at ¶ 13; citing Pennoyer v. Neff, 95 U.S. 714, 734 (1878)(in an action to quiet title or to determine the ownership interests in real property, in rem jurisdiction is appropriate).

Based on the facts presented and the documents filed in this case, the Court orders Administratrix to serve this Order to all interested parties by publication in a newspaper of regular circulation for four consecutive weeks. Administratrix shall also serve Triple J Enterprise the Motion to Amend Inventory and Order After Hearing. The hearing on Administratrix's Motion to Amend Inventory will be heard on April 6, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. Interested parties are ordered to appear before the Court to present their claims.

SO ORDERED this 25th day of February, 2021.

/s/ **HONORABLE WESLEY M. BOGDAN**
Associate Judge

PacificRIM
CNMI, LLC.

Career Opportunities

PREMIERE CNMI Construction Company is looking for qualified and committed individuals for the following "Long Term" positions.

- **Superintendent**
- **Foreman**
- **Accounting Assistant**

U.S. Eligible Workers Competitive Salary and Benefits

Interested candidates may email your resumes to esannicolas@pacificrimco.net or call 670.588.7746.

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 3, 2021 | 5:00 PM
Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center | Susupe
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666
www.cnmizoning.com

AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of 02/03/2021 Zoning Board Meeting minutes
5. Public Comments *(not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)*

B. Public Hearings:
1. Conditional Use Application #2020-4506 – Marians Hemp Farms is proposing to utilize 5 (Five) Cargo Containers, 2 (Two) 20 foot and 3 (Three) 40 foot, to construct a 1-storey building structure measuring 43'.7" (L) x 208'.10" (W) for its Cannabis Farm Use. This site is located on Lot No. 103 D 06 in the Village of Gualo Rai. This area is zoned as Rural zoning district.

C. New Business
1. Operations Reports (Permitting & Enforcement)

D. Miscellaneous
1. Next Meeting – April 7th
2. Other Matters

E. Adjournment

In an effort to provide public access to this meeting during this pandemic, the Commonwealth Zoning Board will host this meeting via:

Zoom Video Communications
Meeting Link:
https://zoom.us/j/6853007492?pwd=Q0daYlNPMDdXdFlQRTQ4UkhFRjViUT09
Meeting Code: 685 300 7492

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Don't make it easier for police to enter your home

The Fourth Amendment says: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated." Too often, however, the privacy protected by that amendment has been undermined by exceptions blessed by the courts.

On Wednesday the Supreme Court was asked in a California case to carve out yet another exception—allowing police to enter someone's home without a warrant when an officer has probable cause to believe that even a minor offense had been committed. Such a ruling would be a disaster for the right of privacy.

In October 2016 California Highway Patrol Officer Aaron Weikert noticed that Arthur Lange was playing loud music and honking his horn as he was driving home in Sonoma. Weikert later testified that he believed the music and honking violated state laws against excessive noise.

Weikert followed Lange home and, as Lange was preparing to turn into his driveway, the officer said he turned on flashing red lights, a signal that a motorist should stop. Lange pulled into his garage and then, as the electric garage door was descending, Weikert used his foot to stop it from closing. Then he entered the garage and noticed signs that Lange was intoxicated.

Lange's lawyer sought to suppress the evidence obtained by Weikert because the officer had entered Lange's residence without a warrant. But California courts took the position that the officer didn't need a warrant because of "exigent circumstances"—legal jargon for an emergency in which police must act swiftly. The Supreme Court in the past has indicated that "hot pursuit" of a fleeing felony suspect is also an exigent circumstance.

In this case, the "exigent circumstances" were underwhelming: The officer supposedly had probable cause to believe that Lange, by ignoring the flashing lights, had committed the misdemeanor offenses of failing to obey a lawful order and obstructing a peace officer. Thus a cascade of minor offenses became a justification for invading the privacy of Lange's home.

To resolve this case, the court need not hold that police may never enter a home without a warrant in search of a misdemeanor suspect; the issue is whether the court will adopt a rule permitting all such actions, no matter how trivial the offense.

At Wednesday's argument, some justices seemed concerned about the effect of a decision in favor of Lange. Justice Stephen G. Breyer pointed out that in some states, misdemeanor offenses include serious crimes. Lange's lawyer, Jeffrey Fisher, acknowledged that fact, but he argued persuasively that the court should treat such incidents on a case-by-case basis.

That would be a sensible approach at any time. But it's especially important that the court not give police officers more leeway to skirt the Fourth Amendment during a national reckoning about police misconduct.

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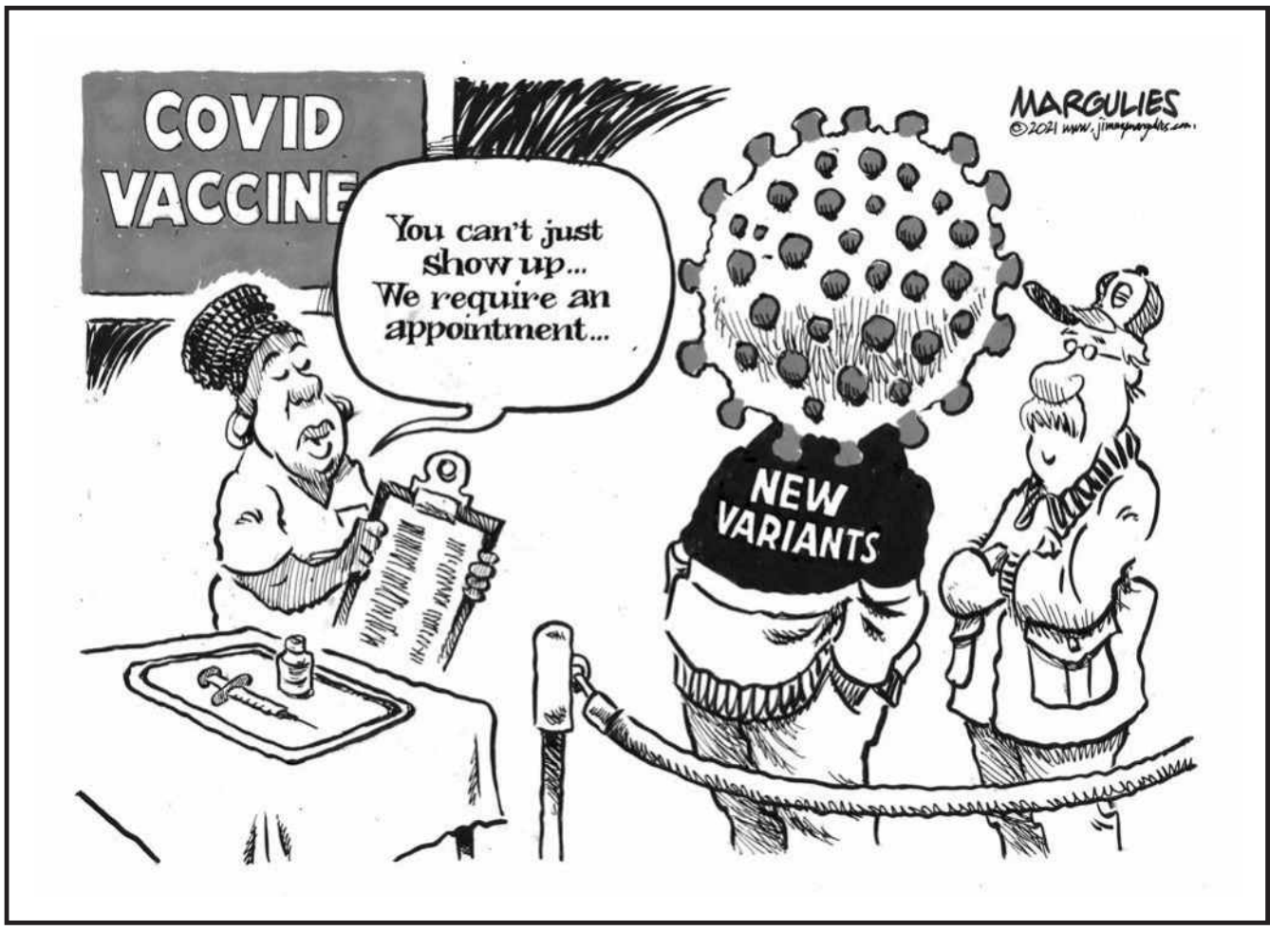

Time to apply ample lessons from abroad to improve democracy here

By MATT LEIGHNINGER
The Fulcrum

Matt Leighninger is the director of public engagement at Public Agenda, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and engagement organization focused on strengthening democracy, building trust and expanding economic opportunity.

Increasingly, people all over the world are asking how we can make democracy work in new and better ways. On all kinds of issues, people want more choices, more information, and more of a say. Whether the topic is how schools should work or what should be in the local budget, people want their voices to be heard.

The United States is no exception. Americans are clearly looking for change: Our Yankelovich Democracy Monitor research has found that Americans respond enthusiastically to new democratic practices and reforms—especially those giving citizens a greater voice in the decisions that affect their lives and promising more equitable, deliberative, collaborative relationships between citizens and governments.

The most significant challenge is that few understand how to bring about this kind of engagement and reform, or even that it can be done. Most Americans—including most local and state officials and their staff—lack practical knowledge about democratic innovation.

We can gain some democratic inspiration and practical knowledge by taking a look at innovations in other countries. Particularly at the local and state or provincial levels, there are many lessons to learn. Some cities have attained relatively high levels of public trust by creating coherent systems for civic engagement that give citizens meaningful roles in decision-making and problem-solving on many public issues and priorities.

The examples of Cali in Colombia and Bologna in Italy, two recent winners of the Engaged Cities Award given by Cities of Service, illustrate the power of these more democratic local systems. Innovative models for connecting citizens with state and provincial policymaking have also appeared in places like the Brazilian province of Rio Grande do Sul and the state of Western Australia.

Many innovations in other countries—particularly in the Global South—engage much larger numbers, including marginalized populations. And they do so in ways that build social networks and give people a more meaningful say in public decisions. Many also raise up issues of equity and establish public platforms where people examine data on disparities and decide jointly how to address them; in some cases, these reforms have had tangible impacts on economic and political inequity.

Our Healthier Democracies project will examine 10 local and five state or provincial examples from abroad in search of tactics and tools that could be applied in the United States.The work will help spotlight the strength of social networks, point to trust-building strategies and trust in government, gauge levels of support for volunteerism and assess how much influence people have on the public decisions that affect their lives. It will examine how equitable these reforms are, both in terms of who participates and how the outcomes affect different groups.

The new pressures brought by the pandemic have tested these models severely. Some seem to be passing the test, at least from initial reports. For example, the local and national democratic innovations in Taiwan seem to have helped the country respond successfully to COVID-19.

By examining democratic innovations at both the local and state or provincial levels, we can better understand how different types of engagement work at different levels—and gain a clearer sense of how to mix, match, combine and scale them. We may also understand better how the federal government can best support local and state engagement, and even find practices that could be "scaled up" to involve people across the country. We plan to share our learning over the course of the Healthier Democracies initiative through opinion pieces here, in webinars and through reports and video interviews.

In both the United States and around the world, it is critical we learn how to make democracy work better. As people become more dissatisfied with their political systems, their trust in public institutions continues to fall. This has enabled authoritarian figures, who argue that rule by a tyrant is better than rule by democracy, to seize power in many countries.

We should also recognize we need reforms to governance, not just elections. To understand the problems with our democracy, and the ways we might improve it, we should be looking at what happens in between elections and not just how we vote.

Democracies can and should learn from one another in order to improve. Back in the 18th century, the initial designs for early American political institutions were informed by examples from other nations and cultures, including the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (also known as the Iroquois Confederacy) here in North America. Seeking inspiration and practical knowledge from other countries worked for us then, and can help us again today.

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Demystifying Appendix A of the Final Programmatic Agreement

'RICK'S COLUMN'
By RICK PEREZ
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rick Perez used to serve in the U.S. military and has work experiences in public policy research and public affairs. He is passionate about national security and geopolitics and runs a newsletter called Guam Affairs at guamaffairs.substack.com. For questions or comments, contact Perez at rickp7839@gmail.com.

Final Programmatic Agreement, Appendix A, training areas: tables and maps

Appendix A, an attachment to the Guam Final Programmatic Agreement, is 115 pages long, full of detailed information. About 73 of the 115 pages relate to the navy, while the remaining pages apply to the air force. This appendix is referenced in the Final Programmatic Agreement under the "Stipulations" section, subsection four. Subsection four basically says that information and maps listed in Appendix A do not require additional review or discussion for PA document purposes. But it also says that the military will notify the Guam State Historic Preservation Officer of proposed testing and training not already listed in Appendix A.

Appendix A, Naval Base Guam

The navy organizes its Naval Base Guam information into 20 broad categories, presented as select training activities tied to various locations contained in approximately 163 rows. The navy breaks out its information into five category columns: "training activity," "location," "description," "mitigations," and "stressors." Many training activities are listed several times such as "combat search and rescue," "underwater survey," or "bivouac," while several other training activities are named once. Stated mitigation measures are vague and unclear and do not necessarily demonstrate a level of confidence to show that anything of lasting substance was agreed upon by the ancient Chamorro Pacific Islander people of Guam and the military.

PowerPoint style pictures and unclear labels

There are 19 PowerPoint style pictures of each named training area contained within the Naval Base Guam portion of Appendix A. Each picture is scaled differently so there is no consistency. Each picture has colored legend references that mostly list military ranges (solid red area), installation areas (broken red lines), training areas (solid green lines), and fleet exercises (green boxes). One PowerPoint picture has eight legends. There are no glossaries defining the legends.

All but two PowerPoint pictures cover areas in and close by southwestern Guam. Approximately 157 icons categorized as "authorized military training actions" are listed, and they range from labels such as "unmanned underwater vehicle training" to "amphibious raids," to "sniper training," to "EOD and Special Forces Amphibious Training." Glossaries containing precise definitions of all named activities are missing. Radio Barrigada, Outer Apra Harbor and Orote Point represent the areas that have the most extensive military training type listings.

Most of the PowerPoint style pictures have August 2020 dates, two pictures have September 2020 dates, and one picture has a November 2020 date. All maps have the label "Section 106" as well as "NAVFAC" but there is no information indicating that the government of Guam had any part in the preparations of these pictures. All labels have a disclaimer that says that the military "does not attest to or guarantee the currency and/or validity of the data contained in this map, nor does it attest to any spatial accuracy. This map is for planning purposes only."

Agreement?

It is hard to find any evidence in the Naval Base Guam portion of Appendix A that supports the idea that the government of Guam had agreed to anything, of any kind, anywhere. Do our ancient Chamorro Pacific Islander people really understand what Appendix A is all about? Do our families, friends and cohorts really understand the meaning of Section 106? Do we really understand how this document came to be called an "agreement"?

Omissions including references to the Chamorro people of Guam

Appendix A Naval Base Guam has many informational omissions. For example, information is not made available as to how many people are or will be involved in the named military training activities. No mention is made as to how many calendar days each named military activity will be conducted per year. In addition, no information is contained that shows the different training tempos, if any, that will be implemented in any named activity.

What is most interesting is that no mention or reference to the government of Guam is made as to how, when, and where input was received, how and when negotiations took place, and how and when specific agreed upon outcomes were produced.

In 91 separate instances, Appendix A Naval Base Guam states that navy activity will result in "Cultural Resources" stressors, based on "Physical disturbance and strike" with nine additional references containing the word "explosives." What cultural resources are we talking about? What are the interpretations of "Physical disturbance and strike"?

There are roughly 64 instances where the "Mitigations" column is left blank and where the "Stressors" column contains the word "None." Without a specific definition contained in Appendix A to clarify what is meant by "Cultural Resources" and without a detailed understanding of all training site locations, it is not possible for the Chamorro people to accurately assess and understand the true significance and damage that may take place or is already taking place at several navy-controlled locations.

Where are we headed and what's needed?

Appendix A is lengthy and as a stand-alone document, deserves to be more closely reviewed, discussed, and understood moving forward. Much of the language contained in the Naval Base Guam portion of Appendix A is relatively unclear and vague and may be easily misunderstood by the public and our ancient Chamorro Pacific Islander people. There are no glossaries and no signs that the government of Guam participated in putting the Naval Base Guam portion of Appendix A together.

What may be most needed now are a series of legislative public hearings that invite and help grow our collective understanding of this Naval Base Guam portion of Appendix A, as well as the overall Final PA document. It is in our collective best interest to fully empower ourselves through demystifying this entire document.

J&J vaccine will speed up vaccination efforts

Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Gov. Josh Tenorio issue the following statement regarding the Emergency Use Authorization issued by the Food and Drug Administration for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine:

"Our island is leading the nation in vaccination efforts, and the addition of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine ensures we reach our goal of achieving herd immunity as early as the summer months. Its single dosage will allow us to administer vaccines faster and to more people, which translates to more protection for our community," said Leon Guerrero. "We will continue to work closely with our federal partners to secure additional allotments to Guam, as we have successfully done in previous months."

"We welcome as many options that we can avail of to expeditiously reach our goal of protecting as many people as possible, especially individuals most at risk," said Tenorio.

Parents urged to use $1,000 Child Tax Credit increase wisely

In addition to making the nationwide Child Tax Credit increase apply to families in the Marianas, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan successfully negotiated to allow the credit to be paid out monthly, so that it would be of most use. Both provisions are part of the American Rescue Plan the House of Representatives is expected to vote on shortly. In the following op-ed, Sablan asks parents to use this new assistance as it was intended: to help their children grow and stay healthy.

By GREGORIO KILILI C. SABLAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) is the delegate of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the U.S. House of Representatives.

As the American Rescue Plan moves forward in Congress, you have probably heard that unemployment assistance will be extended to August, taxpayers will receive an additional $1,400 rebate, teachers and staff will continue to be paid with more federal funding to keep our schools open, there is more money for food aid and vaccinations, and the Commonwealth and municipal governments will share in half a billion dollars for operating expenses.

There is also new tax relief for working families, including permanent federal funding of the Earned Income Tax Credit and an increased Child Tax Credit. Currently, the Child Tax Credit is up to $2,000 per child through age 16. The Rescue Plan increases that to $3,000, makes 17-year-olds eligible, and for children 6 years old and under provides $3,600.

Child support payments like this have shown to boost academic achievement and improve children's health and wellbeing. Long-term studies point to increased lifespans and higher incomes for those helped by these cash transfers.

One way to make this aid most effective is to pay it monthly rather than once at the end of each tax year. And the original version of the American Rescue Plan made that change from a yearly lump-sum to monthly payments—but only for families in U.S. states.

Working with the House Ways and Means Committee, I was able to get that fixed. Parents in the Marianas will also be eligible for advance monthly payments in the version of the bill the House is now voting on and will send to the Senate. Because monthly payments mean an extra administrative cost, I added $300,000 for the Commonwealth government. But the bill does allow the governor to decide to stick with an annual payment, if he does not want the responsibility of cutting checks monthly.

One reason advance monthly payments are more helpful than an annual lump sum is because the money is available when needed. If your child's sneakers wear out in August, you won't have to wait to replace them. If you want to improve the quality and freshness of the food you serve your family, you will be able to use your monthly Child Tax Credit. You could even save some of that money each month, so it is available for college tuition or another big-ticket item for your child.

Ultimately, though it is up to parents to use these federal funds as intended: to improve your children's health and wellbeing today and help them live in the years ahead as productive and happy adults.

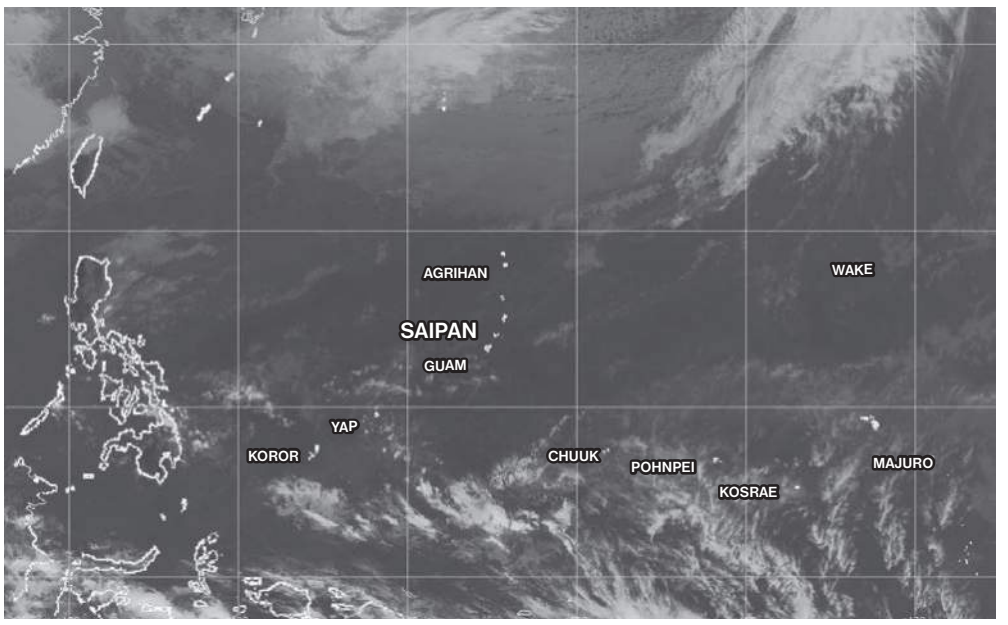
The Senate still must act on the American Rescue Plan, and the President must sign the bill into law. But, if enacted as expected, the increased Child Tax Credit can make life better for your children and your family. Please, use it wisely.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
87º 77º	87º 77º	86º 76º	86º 76º	86º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:18 AM, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies with moderate to fresh trade winds prevail across the Marianas this morning. Buoys show seas between 4 and 7 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Showers	86º / 78º
Palau	Thunderstorms	83º / 77º
Yap	Thunderstorms	84º / 78º
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	84º / 80º
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84º / 78º
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84º / 78º
Majuro	Showers	83º / 79º

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Tuesday	6:33 AM	6:24 PM
Wednesday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM
Thursday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:31 AM	6:25 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	7:58 AM	8:20 PM
Tuesday	-	8:41 AM	9:18 PM
Wednesday	-	9:25 AM	10:16 PM
Thursday	-	10:11 AM	11:16 PM
Friday	-	11:00 AM	5:09 AM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Rain	75º / 66º
Beijing	Sunny	39º / 16º
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	63º / 52º
Honolulu	Thunderstorms	78º / 71º
London	Showers	48º / 37º
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	78º / 54º
Manila	Showers	86º / 73º
Melbourne	Sunny	72º / 55º
Miami	Cloudy	69º / 65º
New York	Mostly Sunny	34º / 30º
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	46º / 36º
Paris	Showers	52º / 39º
Busan	Sunny	45º / 28º
Rome	Showers	57º / 50º
Salem	Sunny	56º / 35º
San Francisco	Foggy	56º / 46º
Seoul	Sunny	36º / 18º
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	45º / 34º
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	40º / 34º

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:03 AM	Low Tide	-0.20
9:27 AM	High Tide	1.89
3:30 PM	Low Tide	0.57
9:01 PM	High Tide	1.89

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:40am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

BEA CABRERA
Coffee & Bread owner Edwin Sta. Theresa not only sells bread in his shop but also distributes them to other stores around Tinian.

Tinian's Coffee & Bread serves fresh bread every day

When Edwin Sta. Theresa moved to Tinian seven years ago from Saipan to continue his work as x-ray specialist and ultrasound technician, he knew that he wanted to maximize every single minute of the day. Since work at the hospital starts at 9am, he thought of opening a business that can operate before that; thus, the birth of Coffee & Bread located in San Jose that serves customers breakfast only starting at 5am.

"Starting that early gives my customers assurance that they get fresh-from-the-oven bread everyday… Before I came here, I had a video production business on Saipan and when I moved to Tinian which is quieter than Saipan, I knew I had to keep myself busy so armed with extra money, I looked around to see what kind of business should I venture into this time?" he said.

"Going around, I found out that there is no bakery on island and I decided to step up to the plate and provide that. I didn't know anything about bread but I self-studied and with the help of my current cook/baker we are getting by. The return of investment is just the right amount to pay the rent and salary that is why I need to do something else and expanding Coffee & Bread into a bakery and restaurant by adding dishes is part of my plans," he added.

Coffee & Bread specialties include French bread, toasted bread, star bread, turtle bread, loaf bread, and pandesal. The bestsellers are ensyamada and donuts. "My customers are 60% Filipinos and 40% locals which is a good mix… aside from Filipino favorites, we are trying to adopt American bread too… People also like that I keep my shop clean especially during this time of the pandemic. I work in the hospital that is why I am very particular about cleanliness," Sta. Theresa said.

"As soon as you work here on Tinian in any kind of job, people know you. The reason why I say this is that people come here and say they are happy for me. Their words make me strong and at the same time if they like what they buy and taste, word gets around and then more people are enticed to check my products in the shop," Sta. Theresa added.

Aside from selling bread in his own bakery, Coffee & Bread also distributes to seven other groceries and stores on Tinian. "The list includes U Save, JJ Store, etc.… I am anticipating more customers so I hired two more people—a cook from Rota and a waitress/cashier from Saipan. This will help me with added items on the breakfast menu," Sta. Theresa said.

"Despite of the many challenges—the COVID-19 pandemic which lessened my customers like the construction workers at the casino because work stopped for them—I just find myself moving on and overcoming challenges. My priority is my family and because of them I work hard to make things work and make ends meet," Sta. Theresa added.

Coffee & Bread is located in San Jose at the back of the Mobil gas station. They are open from Tuesday to Sunday, 5am to 9am. For more information, call (670) 788-8552 or look them up on Facebook: Coffee & Bread.

BEA CABRERA
Coffee & Bread is open from Tuesday to Sunday, 5am-9am, to accommodate customers after Sunday Mass.

BankGuam Holding Company declares dividends

HAGATNA, Guam—BankGuam Holding Company (BKGMF) announced that its board of directors declared a quarterly cash dividend of $0.10 per share for the holders of its common stock and a dividend payment to the holders of the Company's 5.5% Fixed Rate/Floating Rate Noncumulative Preferred Stock, Series A, at its Board's regular meeting held on Monday, Feb. 22, 2021. The dividends will be paid on March 31, 2021, to shareholders of record as of March 15, 2021. ***(PR)***

Yellen's encore: Lending economic heft to Biden's virus plan

WASHINGTON (AP)—On a cold, gray February afternoon, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen stepped out of the West Wing wrapped in a puffy black parka and clutching a folder of documents, seemingly oblivious to the Washington custom of having an aide schlep the paperwork.

Viewed as an outsider to partisan politics, she now has a place in President Joe Biden's inner sanctum, a Ph.D. economist who does the reading, knows the numbers and treats her staff as peers rather than underlings.

Yellen had been at the White House to strategize about how to push through President Joe Biden's proposed $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief plan—a package that could determine how quickly the U.S. economy heals, how the Democrats fare in the midterm elections and just how much Americans can trust the government to solve the nation's toughest problems.

The House passed the package Saturday, sending it to the Senate.

As a former chair of the Federal Reserve, Yellen carries the authority of a public servant who has already helped steer the economy back to health once and now has been called back at age 74 for an encore after former President Donald Trump declined to offer her another term as Fed chair.

She is framing the need for the giant COVID-19 bill in starkly human terms, and her credentials are enough to give pause to Republican lawmakers and other economists who argue the package is so big it would overwhelm the economy.

"Yellen is uniquely poised," said Brian Deese, director of Biden's National Economic Council. "She has as much experience and expertise of addressing the challenges of our time as any living economic policymaker today."

Even in a Washington riven by partisanship, Yellen is held in high regard by members of both parties. As president of the San Francisco Fed, she sounded the alarm about the housing bubble before it fully burst in 2008. She helped nurse the economy back to health as the Fed's vice chair and then as chair sustained the longest expansion in U.S. history.

Yellen's hard-won credibility is now staked on administering a dose of financial adrenaline and mass vaccinations that can bring back the 9.9 million jobs lost to the pandemic within the next two years, an unprecedented burst of hiring.

Biden's proposed stimulus package is broad, with its $1,400 checks to eligible Americans and nearly $500 billion for schools and state and local governments. But Yellen believes that more narrowly targeted measures on unemployment benefits or food aid might miss deserving people like the mother who was forced to leave her job because the pandemic closed schools and childcare centers.

"The truth is there are pockets of pain that go beyond what can be reached in those highly targeted ways," she said at a recent New York Times conference.

Biden hails House passage of $1.9T virus bill, now to Senate

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House approved a $1.9 trillion pandemic relief bill that was championed by President Joe Biden, the first step in providing another dose of aid to a weary nation as the measure now moves to a tense Senate.

"We have no time to waste," Biden said at the White House after the House passage early Saturday. "We act now—decisively, quickly and boldly—we can finally get ahead of this virus. We can finally get our economy moving again. People in this country have suffered far too much for too long."

The new president's vision for infusing cash across a struggling economy to individuals, businesses, schools, states and cities battered by COVID-19 passed on a near party-line 219-212 vote. That ships the bill to the Senate, where Democrats seem bent on resuscitating their minimum wage push and fights could erupt over state aid and other issues.

Democrats said that mass unemployment and the half-million American lives lost are causes to act despite nearly $4 trillion in aid already spent fighting the fallout from the disease. GOP lawmakers, they said, were out of step with a public that polling finds largely views the bill favorably.

"I am a happy camper tonight," Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., said Friday. "This is what America needs. Republicans, you ought to be a part of this. But if you're not, we're going without you."

Republicans said the bill was too expensive and said too few education dollars would be spent quickly to immediately reopen schools. They said it was laden with gifts to Democratic constituencies like labor unions and funneled money to Democratic-run states they suggested didn't need it because their budgets had bounced back.

"To my colleagues who say this bill is bold, I say it's bloated," said House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. "To those who say it's urgent, I say it's unfocused. To those who say it's popular, I say it is entirely partisan."

The overall relief bill would provide $1,400 payments to individuals, extend emergency unemployment benefits through August and increase tax credits for children and federal subsidies for health insurance.

Nation

AP sources: Feds pinpoint suspect in officer's riot death

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal investigators probing the death of a U.S. Capitol Police officer killed in the Jan. 6 riot have zeroed in on a suspect seen on video appearing to spray a chemical substance on the officer before he later collapsed and died, two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press.

The FBI has obtained video that shows the person spraying Brian Sicknick and other law enforcement officers during the Jan. 6 riot, the people said. But they cautioned that federal agents haven't yet identified the suspect by name and the act hasn't been directly tied to Sicknick's death.

The idea that Sicknick died after being sprayed by a chemical irritant has emerged in recent weeks as a new theory in the case.

Investigators initially believed that Sicknick was hit in the head with a fire extinguisher, based on statements collected early in the investigation, according to one of the people and another law enforcement official briefed on the case. But as they've collected more evidence, the theory of the case has evolved and investigators now believe Sicknick may have ingested a chemical substance—possibly bear spray—during the riot that may have contributed to his death, the officials said.

The people could not publicly discuss the details of an ongoing investigation and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Sicknick died after defending the Capitol against the mob that stormed the building as Congress was voting to certify Joe Biden's electoral win over Donald Trump. It came after Trump urged supporters on the National Mall to "fight like hell" to overturn his defeat.

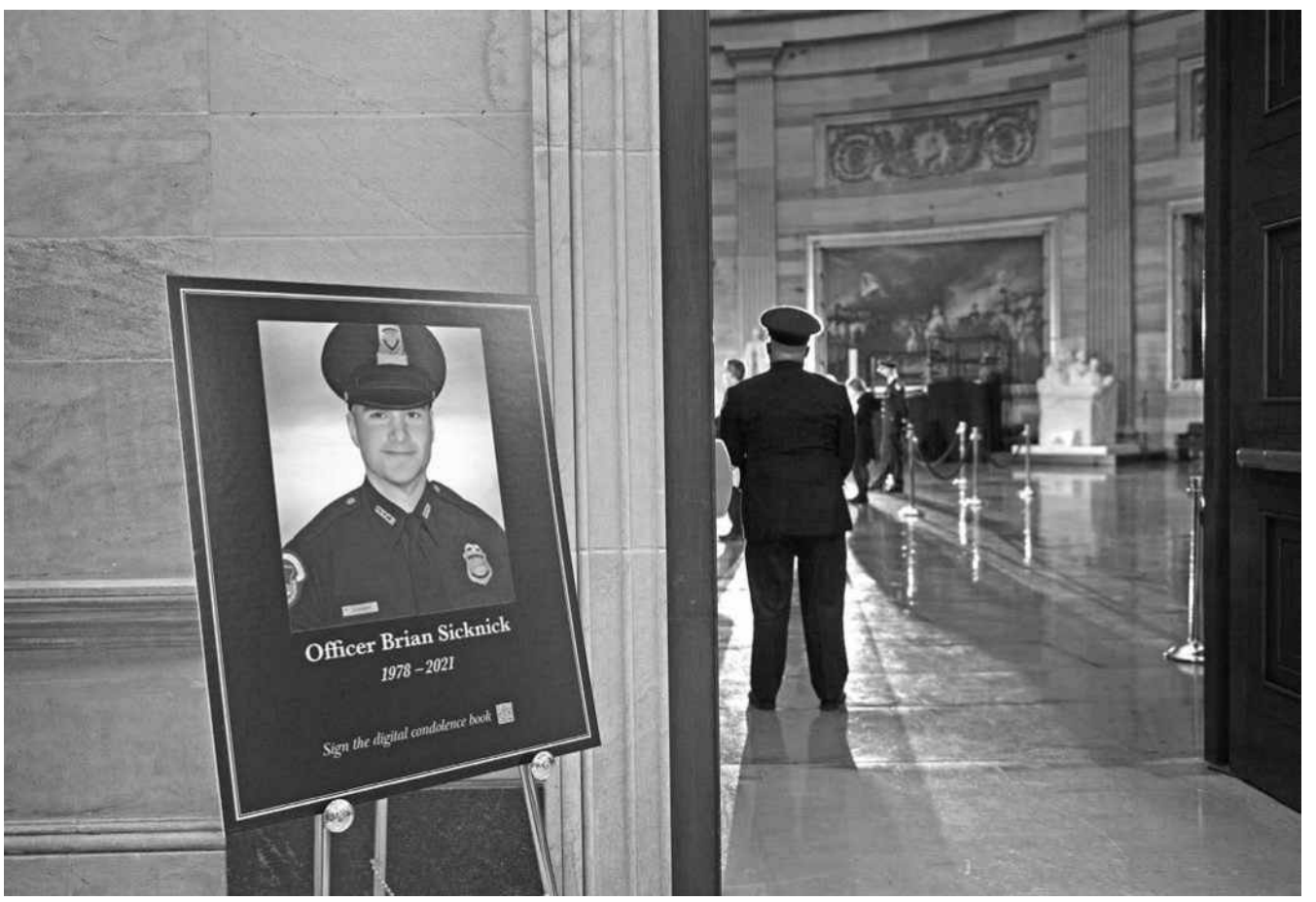
The circumstances surrounding Sicknick's death remain unclear and a final cause of death has not yet been determined. Capitol Police have said he died after he was injured "while physically engaging with protesters" and this week, the agency's acting chief said officials consider it a line-of-duty death.

Sicknick collapsed later on, was hospitalized and died. The Justice Department opened a federal murder investigation into his death, but prosecutors are still evaluating what specific charges could be brought in the case, the people said.

In a statement late Friday, Capitol Police said the medical examiner's report on Sicknick's death is not yet complete. "We are awaiting toxicology results and continue to work with other government agencies regarding the death investigation," the statement said.

The New York Times first reported investigators were zeroing in on one suspect in the case; CNN previously reported law enforcement had collected video evidence to identify a handful of potential suspects.

The FBI has already released about 250 photos of people being sought for assaulting federal law enforcement officers during the riot. Some have already been arrested and the Justice Department said about 300 people have been charged with federal offenses related to the riot.



AP

In this Feb. 2, 2021, file photo a placard is displayed with an image of the late U.S. Capitol Police officer Brian Sicknick on it as people wait for an urn with his cremated remains to be carried into the U.S. Capitol to lie in honor in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington.

Republicans test history in vote against pandemic relief

NEW YORK (AP)—With the nation's financial system on the brink of collapse, all but three Republicans voted against the massive stimulus package designed to protect millions of Americans from financial ruin.

It was early 2009, just weeks after Joe Biden was sworn in as vice president, and the vote marked the beginning of a new era of partisan gridlock in Congress. And for beleaguered Republicans coming off a disastrous election, it was their first step back to political power.

Democrats voted alone to stabilize the economy, and two years later, a Republican Party unified only by its unwavering opposition to Barack Obama's presidency seized the House majority.

Now, just weeks into the Biden presidency, the GOP is gambling that history will repeat itself.

Early Saturday morning, 210 House Republicans joined two Democrats in voting against a $1.9 trillion pandemic relief package that would send $1,400 checks to most Americans and hundreds of billions more to help open schools, revive struggling businesses and provide financial support to state and local governments. Senate Republicans are expected to oppose a similar measure in the coming weeks, arguing that the bill is not focused enough on the pandemic. But with near-unanimous Democratic support, the measure could still become law.

It's far too soon to predict the political fallout from the first major legislative fight of the Biden era. But as the nation struggles to recover from the worst health and financial crises in generations, strategists in both parties agree that it's risky for Republicans to assume their 2009 playbook will lead to the same ballot-box success this time around.

"I think that the Republicans' misread here is that it is the same, or that they can just oppose it and there's no ramifications," said John Anzalone, the Biden campaign's chief pollster. "It's a different world."

Veteran Republican pollster Frank Luntz said Republicans now bear the burden of clearly articulating their opposition—a task made more difficult by the distraction of former President Donald Trump's high-profile war against the Republican establishment.

"The definer of the legislation wins this battle," Luntz said. "This could end up being the most important vote of 2021."

There are reasons to believe that politics have changed since Republicans last unified against a sweeping stimulus package, not the least of which is Trump's omnipresence in the party.

At the same time, the scale of the economic devastation and disruption wrought by the coronavirus pandemic dwarfs that of the 2008 financial crisis. At its peak, roughly 9 U.S. million jobs were lost in the Great Recession, compared with 22 million jobs lost to the coronavirus. A year after the pandemic began, nearly 10 million U.S. jobs remain lost, more than 20 million children are out of school, half a million Americans are dead, and roughly 100,000 businesses are feared closed forever.

Polling suggests that an overwhelming majority of voters—including a significant number of Republicans—supports the Democrats' pandemic relief plan. And the business community along with state and local leaders in both parties are crying out for help.

ACROSS THE NATION

2nd former aide accuses Cuomo of sexual harassment

A second former aide has come forward with sexual harassment allegations against New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who responded with a statement Saturday saying he never made advances toward her and never intended to be inappropriate. Charlotte Bennett, a health policy adviser in the Democratic governor's administration until November, told The New York Times that Cuomo asked her inappropriate questions about her sex life, including whether she had ever had sex with older men. Another former aide, Lindsey Boylan, a former deputy secretary for economic development and special adviser to the governor, recently accused Cuomo of subjecting her to an unwanted kiss and inappropriate comments. Cuomo denied the allegations. Cuomo said in a statement Saturday that Bennett was a "hardworking and valued member of our team during COVID" and that "she has every right to speak out." He said he had intended to be a mentor for Bennett, who is 25. "I never made advances toward Ms. Bennett nor did I ever intend to act in any way that was inappropriate," Cuomo's statement said. ***(AP)***

Doctor appears in court video call while performing surgery

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—The Medical Board of California said it would investigate a plastic surgeon who appeared in a videoconference for his traffic violation trial while operating. The Sacramento Bee reports Dr. Scott Green appeared Thursday for his Sacramento Superior Court trial, held virtually because of the coronavirus pandemic, from an operating room. He was dressed in surgical scrubs with a patient undergoing the procedure just out of view; the beeps of medical machinery can be heard in the background. "Hello, Mr. Green? Hi. Are you available for trial?" asked a courtroom clerk as an officer summoned to appear in trial raised her eyebrows. "It kind of looks like you're in an operating room right now?" "I am, sir," Green replied. "Yes, I'm in an operating room right now. Yes, I'm available for trial. Go right ahead." The clerk reminded Green the proceedings were being livestreamed because traffic trials are required by law to be open to the public, and Green said he understood. He appeared to continue working with his head down while waiting for Court Commissioner Gary Link to enter the chamber. When Link appeared and saw the doctor on the screen, the judge hesitated to proceed with the trial out of concern for the welfare of the patient.

Virginia lawmakers vote to legalize marijuana in 2024

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—Virginia lawmakers gave final approval Saturday to a bill that will legalize marijuana for adult recreational use, but not until 2024, when retail sales of the drug would also begin. With a compromise bill clearing the House and Senate, Virginia becomes the first Southern state to vote to legalize marijuana, joining 15 other states and the District of Columbia. The legislation now goes to Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam, who supports legalization. The bill was a top priority for Democrats, who framed legalization as a necessary step to end the disparate treatment of people of color under current marijuana laws. But talks between Democrats in the House and Senate grew tense in recent days, and a compromise version of the massive bill did not emerge publicly until late Saturday afternoon.

Asia

S. Korea starts vaccinating

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea administered its first coronavirus vaccines Friday to people at long-term care facilities, launching a mass immunization campaign that authorities hope will restore some level of normalcy by the end of the year.

The rollout comes at a critical time for the country, which has seen its hard-won gains against the virus get wiped out by a winter surge and is struggling to mitigate the pandemic's economic impact. Yet it also comes with controversy over the government's decision to delay inoculating people older than 65.

» But people over 65 must wait

"I felt very anxious over the past year, but I feel more secure now after receiving the vaccine," said Lee Gyeong-soon, a nursing home worker, who got her shot at a public health center in northern Seoul.

More than 5,260 residents and workers at 213 nursing homes, mental health facilities and rehab centers who are younger than 65 were to receive their first shots of the two-dose vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University on Friday.

An unspecified number of patients and workers at 292 long-term care hospitals and in the same age group will also get the vaccine, according to officials at the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency.

By the end of March, authorities plan to complete injecting the first doses to some 344,000 residents and workers at long-term care settings, who will receive the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines, and 55,000 frontline medical workers, who will receive shots developed by Pfizer and BioNTech.

Long-term care facilities, where elders or people with serious health problems often live in crowded settings, have endured the worst of South Korea's outbreak. About 35% of the country's COVID-19 deaths by the end of 2020 were linked to these facilities, said Jaehun Jung, a professor of preventive medicine at the Gachon University College of Medicine in Incheon.

But there's criticism over the government's decision to delay the approval of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines for people over 65 until the developers provide more data on effectiveness for that age group. The government has yet to approve any vaccine for people older than 65, but officials have indicated the Pfizer shot could get approved first.

Jung says the decision risks the safety of people who are most vulnerable to COVID-19 when the country will be chiefly dependent on locally produced Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines during the early part of its vaccination campaign.

Despite what the government sees as a lack of laboratory data on its efficacy in older adults, the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is still showing real-world effectiveness in preventing serious illnesses and lowering death rates in the countries where it was used, experts say. People over 80 account for just 5% of the country's coronavirus cases, but 56% of its virus-related deaths, Jung said.

Myanmar police deploy early to crank up pressure on protests

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Police in Myanmar escalated their crackdown on demonstrators against this month's military takeover, deploying early and in force on Saturday as protesters sought to assemble in the country's two biggest cities and elsewhere.

Security forces in some areas appeared to become more aggressive in using force and making arrests, utilizing more plainclothes officers than had previously revealed themselves. Photos posted on social media showed that residents of at least two cities, Yangon and Monywa, resisted by erecting makeshift street barricades to try to hinder the advance of the police.

Myanmar's crisis took a dramatic turn on the international stage at a special session of the United Nations General Assembly on Friday when the country's U.N. ambassador declared his loyalty to the ousted civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi and called on the world to pressure the military to cede power.

There were arrests Saturday in Myanmar's two biggest cities, Yangon and Mandalay, where demonstrators have been hitting the streets daily to peacefully demand the restoration of the government of Suu Kyi, whose National League for Democracy party won a landslide election victory in November. Police have increasingly been enforcing an order by the junta banning gatherings of five or more people.

Many other cities and towns have also hosted large protests against the Feb. 1 coup.

Police in Dawei, in the southeast, and Monywa, 135 kilometers (85 miles) northwest of Mandalay, used force against protesters. Both cities, with populations of less then 200,000 each, have been seeing large demonstrations.

Social media carried unconfirmed reports of a protester shot dead in Monywa. The reports could not immediately be independently confirmed but appeared credible, with both photos and identification of the victim, though later accounts said the woman had not died. The reports from Monywa also said dozens or more people were arrested.

The military takeover reversed years of slow progress toward democracy after five decades of military rule. Suu Kyi's party would have been installed for a second five-year term in office, but the army blocked Parliament from convening and detained her and President Win Myint, as well as other top members of her government.

At the General Assembly in New York, Myanmar's U.N. ambassador, Kyaw Moe Tun, declared in an emotional speech to fellow delegates that he represented Suu Kyi's "civilian government elected by the people" and supported the fight against military rule.

MRTV, a Myanmar state-run television channel, broadcast an announcement Saturday from the Foreign Ministry that Kyaw Moe Tun has been dismissed from his post because he had abused his power and misbehaved by failing to follow the instructions of the government and betraying it.

Kyaw Moe Tun had urged all countries to issue public statements strongly condemning the coup, and to refuse to recognize the military regime. He also called for stronger international measures to stop violence by security forces against peaceful demonstrators.

He drew loud applause from many diplomats in the 193-nation global body, as well as effusive praise from other Burmese on social media, who described him as a hero. The ambassador flashed a three-finger salute that has been adopted by the civil disobedience movement at the end of his speech in which he addressed people back home in Burmese.

World

317 Nigerian schoolgirls taken in mass abduction

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP)—Gunmen abducted 317 girls from a boarding school in northern Nigeria on Friday, police said, the latest in a series of mass kidnappings of students in the West African nation.

AP

One of the students who was not kidnapped from a Government Girls Junior Secondary School following an attack by gunmen in Jangebe, Nigeria, Friday, Feb. 26, 2021.

Police and the military have begun joint operations to rescue the girls after the attack at the Government Girls Junior Secondary School in Jangebe town, according to a police spokesman in Zamfara state, Mohammed Shehu, who confirmed the number abducted.

One parent, Nasiru Abdullahi, told The Associated Press that his daughters, aged 10 and 13, are among the missing.

"It is disappointing that even though the military have a strong presence near the school they were unable to protect the girls," he said. "At this stage, we are only hoping on divine intervention."

Resident Musa Mustapha said the gunmen also attacked a nearby military camp and checkpoint, preventing soldiers from interfering while the gunmen spent several hours at the school. It was not immediately clear if there were any casualties.

Several large groups of armed men operate in Zamfara state, described by the government as bandits, and are known to kidnap for money and to push for the release of their members from jail.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari said Friday the government's primary objective is to get all the school hostages returned safe, alive and unharmed.

"We will not succumb to blackmail by bandits and criminals who target innocent school students in the expectation of huge ransom payments," he said. "Let bandits, kidnappers and terrorists not entertain any illusions that they are more powerful than the government. They shouldn't mistake our restraint for the humanitarian goals of protecting innocent lives as a weakness, or a sign of fear or irresolution."

He called on state governments to review their policy of making payments, in money or vehicles, to bandits.

"Such a policy has the potential to backfire with disastrous consequences," Buhari said. He also said state and local governments must play their part by being proactive in improving security in and around schools.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres strongly condemned the abductions and called for the girls' "immediate and unconditional release" and safe return to their families, calling attacks on schools a grave violation of human rights and the rights of children, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

Officials: 400 escape, 25 dead after Haiti prison breakout

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Haitian authorities announced Friday that more than 400 inmates escaped and 25 people died in a prison breakout, making it the country's largest and deadliest one in a decade, with the prison director and a powerful gang leader among those killed.

Some believe Thursday's jailbreak at the Croix-des-Bouquets Civil Prison in northeast Port-au-Prince was to free gang leader Arnel Joseph, who had been Haiti's most wanted fugitive until his 2019 arrest on charges including rape, kidnapping and murder.

Joseph was riding on a motorcycle through the Artibonite area in the town of L'Estère on Friday a day after his escape when he was spotted at a checkpoint, police spokesman Gary Desrosiers told The Associated Press. He said Joseph pulled out a gun and died in an exchange of gunfire with police.

Joseph ruled Village de Dieu, or Village of God, a shantytown in downtown Port-au-Prince, and other communities, including some in Artibonite, which is Haiti's largest department.

Authorities have not yet provided much details on the breakout except to say that 60 inmates have been recaptured and the investigation is ongoing. State Secretary Frantz Exantus said authorities have created several commissions to investigate who organized the breakout and why. Among those killed was the prison director, identified as Paul Joseph Hector.

Residents who declined to be identified because they feared for their life told the AP that they saw gunmen shoot at prison guards on Thursday before inmates escaped from the Croix-des-Bouquets penitentiary.

The prison is known for a 2014 breakout in which more than 300 of the 899 inmates being held there at the time escaped. Some believed that attack was designed to free Clifford Brandt, the son of a prominent businessman, who had been imprisoned since 2012 for allegedly kidnapping the adult children of a rival businessman. Brandt was captured two days later near the Dominican Republic border.

After the 2014 breakout, officials said they were taking steps to up security at the prison that Canada built in 2012, including installing security cameras and placing ankle monitors on the most dangerous prisoners. It wasn't immediately clear if any of those measures were taken. At the time of Thursday's breakout, the prison held 1,542 inmates, nearly twice its capacity.

Health & Wellness

This advertorial is sponsored by Tan Holdings HEALTH IS WEALTH Tan Siu Lin Foundation

What parents should know about COVID-19 vaccines and children

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES/TNS

Student pharmacist Wilbur Quimba dilutes vials of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at University Medical Center of Southern Nevada on Dec. 16, 2020, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the emergency use of two COVID-19 vaccines in the U.S. The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is approved for people over 16, and the Moderna vaccine is approved for people over 18. While both vaccines have proven to be safe and effective in adults, the pediatric population is not yet eligible to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

In this Q&A, Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse, a Mayo Clinic pediatric infectious diseases physician, will answer some of the most common questions she's hearing from parents when it comes to kids and COVID-19 vaccines:

Why are most children not yet eligible to be vaccinated for COVID-19?

The reason for this is that vaccine manufacturers have not yet completed clinical trials for COVID-19 vaccines in pediatric age groups. In other words, no COVID-19 vaccine will be approved for use in children until it has been demonstrated to be safe and effective in that age group. Those are the trials that are going on now. Now that the adult trials are well underway and continue to be in progress, vaccine manufacturers have extended enrollment to the lower age limits—down to 12—for both vaccines.

The process that's being followed here is typical of what is done when studying a vaccine. Most vaccines will generally be tested in healthy adult populations initially. After that, we start looking at maybe more vulnerable populations, like children or pregnant women. Obviously in this situation, given the COVID-19 pandemic and the emergency nature, they are quite rapidly including other groups in the trials, so that we can get the vaccine out to as many people as possible to help end the pandemic.

When will COVID-19 vaccines be available for use in children?

In the coming months, we will hear about the results from the trials as they enroll and study these COVID-19 vaccines in each pediatric group. We have no real reason to think that the results will be significantly different than what we have seen in adults. But, obviously, children are a unique population. And, so, that's why we need to ensure that they're studied in pediatric age group. We need to demonstrate and prove that they are in fact safe and effective in that age group. Based on the ages that are now being enrolled in the trials, it is likely that the approval for use in children over 12 will come first before approval for use in younger age groups.

Until children are approved to be vaccinated for COVID-19, should eligible adults who live with children be vaccinated for COVID-19?

Yes. It is very helpful for anyone who becomes eligible to be vaccinated for COVID-19 to be vaccinated. The reason for that is that we are trying to achieve herd immunity to try to slow down and stop the pandemic. This refers to when you have enough of a population that is immune to an infection that the infection cannot easily jump from one person to the other. Herd immunity slows down transmission, so even if children are not yet eligible for vaccination, if the adults around them are vaccinated, that provides them with some protection. In that case, they are less likely to be exposed to COVID-19. Until children are approved to be vaccinated for COVID-19, we certainly encourage any adults who are eligible and live with children to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

What else can young people do to protect themselves from COVID-19?

The things that we're recommending for everyone, including children, in terms of protecting themselves from COVID-19 include staying home if you're feeling sick. This helps protect everyone around you from getting ill. Also, wash your hands well for 20 to 30 seconds, using either soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. And practice physical distancing and wear a mask in public places. We know that these measures, especially when used together, are very effective in decreasing the transmission of COVID-19. And we encourage everyone to continue to follow those recommendations, even as COVID-19 vaccines are being rolled out. ***(Mayo Clinic News Network/TNS)***

Information in this post was accurate at the time of its posting. Due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, scientific understanding, along with guidelines and recommendations, may have changed since the original publication date.

For more information and all your COVID-19 coverage, go to the Mayo Clinic News Network and mayoclinic.org. (Mayo Clinic News Network is your source for health news, advances in research and wellness tips.)

HEALTHY LIVING

A good root

Studies have shown that extract of ginger root may be an effective remedy for several health conditions.

Good for what ails you

- **May reduce pain** in knee and hip from osteoarthritis
- **Taken an hour befor surgery,** may reduce nausea and vomitting following surgery
- **May lessen** menstrual pain

Source: Medline Plus, TNS Photo Service

Cooling Stress Tips: Self-care promotes mental energy

By JUDI LIGHT HOPSON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Have you noticed that you feel energized when you feel loved and nurtured?

Putting time into your appearance, physical well-being, and emotional self-care routine has a payoff. You will feel more ambitious and eager to tackle your goals.

We've all heard the old adage: "When you look good, you feel good. And, when you feel good, you do good." Not necessarily sharp grammar, but you get the point.

Good self-care infuses energy into our spirits and helps us stay upbeat.

Also, when we've put effort into our health and appearance, we can actually stop focusing on ourselves. We can place our energy and attention on other people.

"When I have a nice haircut and style, I smile more and enjoy being around other people," says a financial advisor we'll call Becky. "These days, when I'm working from home, no one sees me. So, I've been looking pretty neglected.

"A couple of weeks ago," she continues, "my sister told me to give up the faded gray t-shirts I was wearing and wear brighter colors instead. She also insisted I let her cut my hair and color it. And, I've got to say, she really did a good job."

Becky believes anyone's personal energy starts to drop when they neglect their looks and exercise routine. She was napping three times a day until her sister snapped her out of the doldrums.

"I've been using a YouTube workout video to exercise," says a chef we'll call Carl. "I'm not working now, so I'm turning into a couch potato. Exercising keeps me from feeling depressed."

A couple we'll call William and Kathy keep themselves revved up by doing the following:

■ They take a drive to a local park three days a week. They have a little picnic in the car and then walk for 30 minutes.

■ They each take a long soak in their old clawfoot bathtub one night each week. They add bath salts and rub themselves down with lotion afterward.

■ They order clothes online once a month. Both William and Kathy feel that a new outfit, even if it's something as basic as sweatpants and a simple shirt, makes them feel nurtured.

"We've tried to eat more fruits and vegetables the past three months," says Kathy. "We were eating too much fast food and way too much meat. Nowadays, we create healthy salads and cook soups with many types of vegetables."

When we're under stress, we all tend to neglect ourselves. We push to take care of business, our bills, our homes, and those we love. Then, when we run out of time, we skip a lot of self-care that could really do us some good.

"Sitting at the computer too much will slow down your metabolism," says a gym owner we'll call Rita. "Getting up to exercise on a treadmill or bike for fifteen minutes every two hours will help."

Rita says she's had to take her own advice recently. She'd been staying home most of the time. Her energy had plummeted and she's gained weight. But, she's gearing up to reopen her gym in the near future.

"My husband puts on music every day at 5:30, so we can exercise for 45 minutes," Rita points out. "On weekends, we exercise vigorously for ninety minutes on Saturdays and Sundays. I now feel more alert."

Penciling in self-care into your daily routine will affirm that you're a priority. Without that feeling, you'll likely feel depressed and you'll have much less drive to accomplish anything.

Judi Light Hopson is author of the stress management book, "Cooling Stress Tips." She is also executive director of USA Wellness Cafe at www.usawellnesscafe.org.

Life & Style

Lady Gaga's dogs recovered safely after theft, shooting

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lady Gaga's two French bulldogs, which were stolen by thieves who shot and wounded their walker, were recovered unharmed Friday, Los Angeles police said.

A woman brought the dogs to the LAPD's Olympic Community Police Station, just northwest of downtown, around 6 p.m, said Capt. Jonathan Tippet, commanding officer of the department's elite Robbery-Homicide Division.

Lady Gaga's representative and detectives went to the station and confirmed that they were the dogs, Tippet said.

The singer is currently in Rome to film a movie.

Gaga

The woman who dropped off the dogs appears to be "uninvolved and unassociated" with Wednesday night's attack, Tippet said.

In a tweet Friday night, the LAPD said the woman had found the dogs "and reached out to Lady Gaga's staff to return them."

Her identity and the location where the dogs were found won't be disclosed for her safety and because of the ongoing investigation, the LAPD said.

The dog walker, Ryan Fischer, was shot once as he walked three of the singer's dogs in Hollywood. Video showed a white sedan pulling up and two men jumping out. They struggled with the dog walker before one pulled a gun and fired a single shot before fleeing with two of the dogs. The third escaped and has since been reunited with Lady Gaga's representatives.

The dog walker can be heard on the video saying he had been shot in the chest. He is expected to survive his injuries, Tippet said.

"I continue to love you Ryan Fischer, you risked your life to fight for our family. You're forever a hero," Lady Gaga said in an Instagram post.

Lady Gaga on Friday repeated her offer of a $500,000 reward for the return of her dogs—whose names are Koji and Gustav—with no questions asked. Tippet said since police were not involved in the reward, he did not know if the woman would receive it.

Prince Harry raps 'Fresh Prince,' says he didn't walk away

LONDON (AP)—Prince Harry, who decamped from England to Southern California last year, rapped the theme song to the 1990s sitcom "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air" during a late-night talk show appearance in which he said he didn't walk away from his royal duties.

During a segment on the CBS television network's "The Late, Late Show with James Corden" that aired early Friday, Harry said he decided to step away from his work as a front-line member of the royal family to protect his wife and son—and his mental health.

"It was stepping back rather than stepping down," he told Corden. "It was a really difficult environment, which I think a lot of people saw, so I did what any father or husband would do and thought, 'How do I get my family out of here?' But we never walked away, and as far as I'm concerned, whatever decisions are made on that side, I will never walk away."

The appearance marked Harry's first interview since his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II, stripped the prince and his wife, the former actress Meghan Markle, of their remaining royal duties earlier this month. Corden's coup trumped Oprah Winfrey, whose interview with the couple is scheduled to air March 7.

The Queen announced her decision on Feb. 19, saying it wasn't possible for the couple to "continue with the responsibilities and duties that come with a life of public service" after they stepped away from the work of the Royal Family. Harry and Meghan replied by saying "service is universal" and underscoring their commitment to the U.K., a response seen by some as disrespectful to the queen.

Whatever issues have divided the royals, Harry suggested he and Meghan remain in touch with the monarch and her husband, Prince Philip. Harry told Corden that the monarch gave Harry and Meghan's son, Archie, a waffle-maker for Christmas and that the senior royals had seen the toddler "running around" in California via Zoom.

The prince also offered a glimpse of the couple's life in the wealthy Santa Barbara County enclave of Montecito, where they generally watch the game show "Jeopardy" and Netflix programs before going to bed. Archie's first word was "crocodile," Harry said.

During the lighthearted segment, which didn't touch on the royal couple's commercial ventures, Corden and the prince tour Southern California on an open top bus. At one point they arrived outside the mansion where the opening sequence of Will Smith's "Fresh Prince" was filmed.

Stephen King talks about crime, creativity and new novel

NEW YORK (AP)—Stephen King doesn't think of himself as a horror writer.

"My view has always been you can call me whatever you want as long as the checks don't bounce," King told The Associated Press during a recent telephone interview. "My idea is to tell a good story, and if it crosses some lines and it doesn't fit one particular genre, that's good."

King

Readers may know him best for "Carrie," "The Shining" and other bestsellers commonly identified as "horror," but King has long had an affinity for other kinds of narratives, from science fiction and prison drama to the Boston Red Sox.

Over the past decade, he has written three novels for the imprint Hard Case Crime: "Joyland," "The Colorado Kid" and "Later," which comes out this week. He loves sharing a publisher with such giants of the past as James M. Cain and Mickey Spillane, and loves the old-fashioned pulp illustrations used on the covers.

At the same time, he enjoys writing a crime story that is more than a crime story—or hardly a crime story at all.

"Joyland" is a thriller set around an amusement park and could just as easily be called a coming-of-age story. "The Colorado Kid" has a dead body on an island off the coast of King's native Maine, but otherwise serves as a story about why some cases are best left unsolved.

"It's the beauty of the mystery that allows us to live sane as we pilot our fragile bodies through this demolition derby world," he writes in the book's afterword.

His new novel has a lot of crime in it but, as King's narrator suggests, it might actually be a horror story. Jamie Conklin is looking back on his childhood, when he was raised by a single mother, a New York literary agent. Like other young King protagonists, Jamie has special powers: He not only can see dead people, but when he asks them questions, they are compelled to tell the truth.

"Later" also features a bestselling novelist and his posthumous book, and a police detective who for a time is the girlfriend of Jamie's mother.

The 73-year-old King has written dozens of novels and stories, and usually has three to four ideas that "are half-baked, kind of like an engine and no transmission." He doesn't write ideas down because, he says, if something is good enough he's unlikely to forget it.

For "Later," he started with the idea of a literary agent who needed to get her late client's manuscript finished, and thought of having a son who communicates with the dead. He then decided the mother needed a companion.

"And I thought, 'You know what, I'm going to make the love relationship female.' Then I thought to myself, 'Cop,' and the cop is dirty and everything fell into place," he says.

King, who publishes most of his work with Simon & Schuster, is part of the founding story of Hard Case Crime. Back in 2004, Charles Ardai and Max Phillips were launching a line of books to "revive pulp fiction in all its lurid midcentury glory." Hoping for some publicity, they wrote to King and asked for a blurb. A representative for the author called and said King did not want to write a blurb for Hard Case Crime; he wanted to contribute a book. That became "The Colorado Kid."

"I sat on the other end of the phone while this sank in and tried to sound cool, like this was the sort of phone call I got every day and twice on Fridays," Ardai wrote in an introduction to "The Colorado Kid," which came out in 2005. "But inside I was turning cartwheels."

Mom's spiritual plans collide with daughter's wedding date

DEAR ABBY
By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: My mother has become very "spiritual" over the last eight years or so. Recently, it has become all-consuming and on the verge of becoming detrimental. She often refers to her "guides" (she says they are feelings, but I think she's getting brainwashed by human "guides" online), who have convinced her to withdraw thousands of dollars from her bank before the second wave of COVID-19 hits.

I recently became engaged. We don't plan to be married until 2022 so our guests can have a fun, safe time at our wedding. Mom wants to take a "mediumship certification" class, which will run for 18 months. The actual certification is scheduled for the month we told her we may want to get married, so now she's trying to guilt me into changing the date. She copied me on the email she sent to the teacher in which she said she would try to "direct me to choose a different date." I let her know she's not going to dictate our wedding day, but is there something more here that needs to be addressed?

CERTIFIABLY ANNOYED

DEAR ANNOYED: I don't think so. Your mother's spiritual life is her personal business, and it would be a mistake to attempt to make it yours. Unless you are convinced her spirit guides cheated her out of the money she withdrew—in which case you should contact the authorities and report it—let her live her life as you are pursuing your own.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married 22 years. They have been a rough 22 years, and I'm no longer in love with him. I will not be looking for another husband should we get divorced.

We tried counseling as well as a Retrouvaille weekend, which was hard emotionally as we learned a new way of communicating. However, after the weekend, I would always initiate the skills we learned, but he would not.

He's retired. I'm still working, yet nothing is getting done around the house. I'm tired of feeling stressed. I don't like cleaning up after him and our daughters, and I'm thinking of moving out.

I feel overwhelmed and want to live by myself for a period of time, but something is stopping me from signing a lease. Our daughters are in college, and my door will be open to them anytime. Should I move out?

ON THE VERGE IN TEXAS

DEAR ON THE VERGE: Perhaps. However, before you sign anything—including divorce papers—please consider discussing your feelings of stress and being overwhelmed with a licensed psychotherapist. Some time away from your stressors might be helpful for you, and a therapist may be able to help you determine how long a period that should be before making anything permanent.

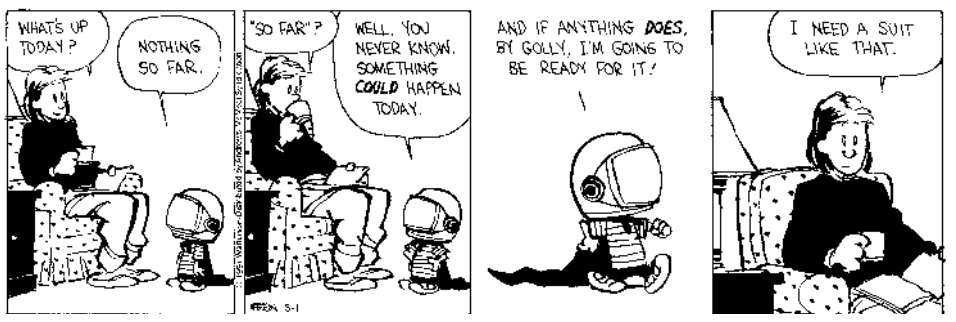
■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT'S UP TODAY?
NOTHING SO FAR.
"SO FAR"?
WELL, YOU NEVER KNOW. SOMETHING COULD HAPPEN TODAY.
AND IF ANYTHING DOES, BY GOLLY, I'M GOING TO BE READY FOR IT!
I NEED A SUIT LIKE THAT.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

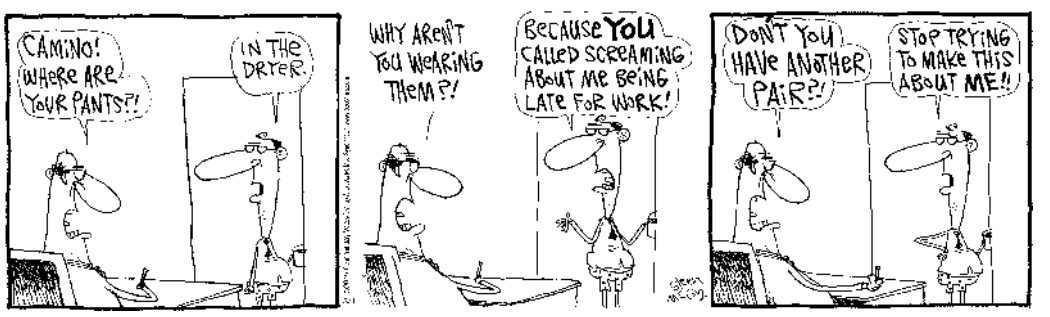
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OH NO. I CAN'T SLEEP.
YOU DON'T SAY.
MAYBE IT WAS ALL THAT TIME IN BED TODAY! AND THE MICRONAPS! AND THE COFFEE!
MAYBE THERE IS A DOWNSIDE TO WORKING IN BED ALL DAY!
MAYBE I... NO... NOPE... SLEEPY NOW...
CRISIS AVERTED.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


CAMINO! WHERE ARE YOUR PANTS?!
IN THE DRYER.
WHY AREN'T YOU WEARING THEM?!
BECAUSE YOU CALLED SCREAMING ABOUT ME BEING LATE FOR WORK!
DON'T YOU HAVE ANOTHER PAIR?!
STOP TRYING TO MAKE THIS ABOUT ME!!

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

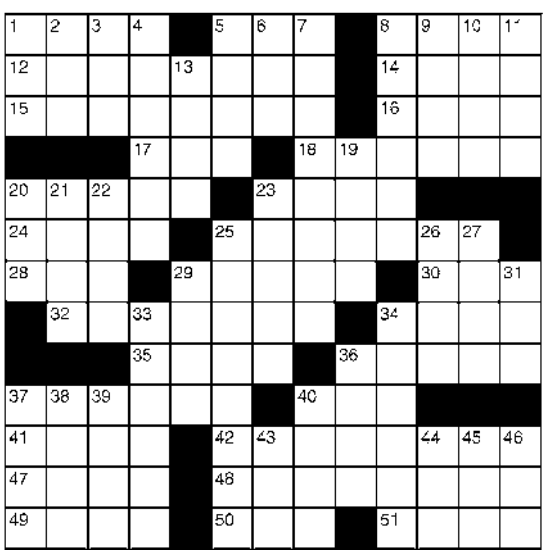
ACROSS
1 Nile bird
5 Egos' counterparts
8 Glitz partner
12 Disney film with dancing hippos
14 Slimming surgery, for short
15 Jonathan Swift, e.g.
16 Salt Lake City team
17 USN officers
18 Says
20 Use the rink
23 Verifiable
24 Pen pals?
25 Subs
28 "— -haw!" (oater cry)
29 Varieties
30 Author Tolstoy
32 Risky undertaking
34 Friend
35 French river
36 Bloodhound's clue
37 Capital of South Dakota
40 Shred
41 Rights org.
42 Greets with a grin
47 Sleep phenomena
48 Engrossed
49 TV/radio host John
50 Menlo Park monogram
51 Jug handles

DOWN
1 Conditions
2 Sheepish remark
3 Bankbook abbr.
4 Long-legged wading birds
5 Egyptian deity
6 Insult, slangily
7 Soak
8 Derriere muscles
9 Low-calorie
10 Unoriginal one
11 Rolling stone's lack
13 Jocular Johnson
19 Harbor vessels
20 CIA operative
21 Chicken —
22 Pulitzer winner James
23 Baseball's Joe
25 Took care of a neighbor's home, say
26 "Legally Blonde" role
27 Vend
29 Swizzle
31 Popeye's Olive
33 "Take your time"
34 Current measure
36 Missile shelter
37 Fraction
38 Frozen drink brand
39 Stately trees
40 Ascend
43 CEO's deg.
44 Govt. lender
45 — Lingus
46 Pro Bowl stats

Solution time: 26 mins.

D	O	C	■	F	R	E	E	■	C	A	P	S
U	N	O	■	I	C	O	N	■	U	R	S	A
H	O	L	D	F	A	S	T	■	S	E	A	S
■	■	C	A	T	S	■	S	T	A	S	H	■
T	E	S	T	Y	■	C	L	I	O	■	■	■
H	A	L	E	■	M	A	I	N	M	A	S	T
E	V	A	■	S	E	U	S	S	■	L	O	U
N	E	W	S	C	A	S	T	■	I	M	A	N
■	■	■	C	A	N	E	■	O	S	A	K	A
C	O	R	O	T	■	■	F	A	U	N	■	■
H	A	U	L	■	S	E	E	S	P	A	S	T
A	R	I	D	■	O	M	N	I	■	C	U	E
S	S	N	S	■	B	U	G	S	■	S	E	X

Last Friday's Answer 03/01



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Justin Bieber, 27; Kesha, 34; Lupita Nyong'o, 38; Ron Howard, 67.

Happy Birthday: Getting along with others will be half the battle throughout 2021. You don't have to become a follower to keep the peace. A strong will and attitude, coupled with nurturing and giving others the freedom to do as they please, will encourage better and lasting relationships and give you the right to pursue what makes you happy. Your numbers are 4, 11, 16, 21, 28, 35, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Do what you can; keep moving forward. Call out to people who can help you make a professional change. A partnership will lead to a new opportunity and a chance to fulfill a long-term goal. Invest in your future. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Consider every angle of a situation you face before you speak up. Getting your facts straight and keeping your emotions out of the equation will help you navigate your way through a transition that can affect your reputation or position. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Concentrate on gathering knowledge, making preparations and reaching out to people who share your interests and goals. Look for opportunities that will stabilize your finances without jeopardizing your reputation. Truth matters, and your future depends on what you have to offer. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Spend money on items that add to your convenience or help you gain ground financially, professionally or contractually. Having a plan in place that will separate you from the competition is crucial if you want to advance. Romance and self-improvement are favored. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Listen, but don't let someone talk you into something that doesn't fit your schedule. Discipline, education and partnering with people who share your beliefs and concerns will be necessary if you expect to get ahead. Shared expenses are not in your best interest. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take care of your responsibilities before you move on to guilty pleasures. You'll enjoy your downtime more if you have nothing hanging over your head worrying you. Make special arrangements with someone you love, and enjoy the moment. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Make a point to get things done, even if you face distractions. Refuse to let anyone push you around, take advantage of you financially or back you into a corner regarding a contract. Stick to your plans, and finish what you start. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Behind the scenes, activities will offer insight into what's to come. Look over your choices and use what's available to come up with something original. Fixing up your space to suit your needs will encourage you to do a better job. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Call on acquaintances to help you get something you want to pursue started. Make your objective your priority. Keep anyone who tries to interfere at arm's length. Opportunity begins with you; stick to your plans. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Refuse to let your emotions take over when discipline and facts are required if you plan to advance. Approach your peers and family with direct questions and concerns, and you'll figure out the best way to get what you want. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Take care of money matters and problems that involve institutions swiftly and with proper documentation to avoid future setbacks. Don't trust anyone to do the work that you're responsible for. Update contracts or licenses to suit trends. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Give back to those who have helped you, and you'll gain respect and a better relationship with people you can count on moving forward. A change of plans will allow you to spend more time with someone you love. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are flexible, persuasive and resourceful. You are thoughtful and innovative.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

9		8	3		7	4		2
					2			
	7	1		5		9	6	
5	4							6
		9		3		1		
6							2	7
	9	6		2		7	8	
			6					
4		7	5		1	6		9

Difficulty Level ★ 3/01

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

7	1	6	9	3	4	8	2	5
3	8	4	5	2	1	9	6	7
5	2	9	7	6	8	3	4	1
1	6	5	4	7	3	2	9	8
2	3	8	6	5	9	1	7	4
4	9	7	1	8	2	5	3	6
8	4	3	2	1	6	7	5	9
6	5	1	3	9	7	4	8	2
9	7	2	8	4	5	6	1	3

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

CORTISONE CREAM **Solution: 7 letters**

T	N	E	E	M	E	D	I	C	A	T	I	O	N	C
H	R	O	E	R	S	S	T	L	P	S	E	V	I	H
B	T	E	I	R	U	S	N	H	O	V	F	T	E	I
R	S	G	A	T	F	P	A	R	I	T	E	T	K	L
O	I	C	N	T	A	R	T	S	U	U	I	E	C	D
S	S	T	N	E	M	T	N	I	O	B	L	O	E	R
B	A	C	K	A	R	E	I	I	O	E	E	O	N	G
A	I	L	C	T	T	T	N	R	A	N	R	O	N	S
T	R	Y	L	N	I	I	S	T	R	P	S	I	L	G
R	O	E	I	E	M	L	A	B	S	I	S	E	N	A
O	S	D	I	C	R	E	L	E	F	S	G	I	L	D
P	P	S	M	R	A	G	H	N	E	L	H	Ⓝ	A	U
H	A	N	D	E	R	S	I	R	E	C	A	Ⓘ	E	L
Y	Y	L	P	P	A	A	D	E	T	S	L	Ⓚ	H	T
A	L	U	M	R	O	F	B	I	S	Y	S	Ⓢ	E	S

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Absorb, Adults, Allergies, Aloe, Anti, Apply, Arms, Atrophy, Back, Balm, Barrier, Bite, Burns, Child, Daily, Dressing, Eruptions, Flake, Formula, Free, Gels, Hand, Heal, Hives, Illness, Intensive, Irritation, Itching, Legs, Lotion, Medication, Neck, Ointment, Pain, Percent, Pharmacy, Psoriasis, Rashes, Relief, Scars, Skin, Strength, Treatment, Tube

Last Friday's Answer: Videographer

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Sexton, Garland help Cavaliers upset 76ers in OT

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Collin Sexton flashed three fingers on each hand as he walked off the court a winner and simply said "that's game."

And who saw that game coming for Cleveland?

Yes, the Cavaliers rebounded from a 10-game losing streak with wins against lowly Atlanta and Houston. But undermanned — and arguably outmatched — Sexton, Darius Garland and Isaac Okoro helped grind out an upset.

"You're going to see these type of moments again," Okoro said.

Sexton scored 28 points, Garland had 25 and the feisty Cavaliers beat the East-best Philadelphia 76ers 112-109 in overtime on Saturday night.

The Cavaliers earned their first road win since Jan. 7 at Memphis and No. 4 on the season. They got one against a Sixers team that built the best record in the Eastern Conference (22-12) on the strength of a 14-2 mark at home.

Make it 14-3.

"Any time you get a tough win like this, it validates what you're capable of," Cavs coach J.B. Bickerstaff said.

Okoro scored the first three points of OT and had 15 when he fouled out. The Cavs led by three and turned the ball over only for Ben Simmons to get whistled for an offensive foul. Garland hit a floater for a five-point lead and the 11-point underdog Cavaliers were on their way to their third straight win.

Joel Embiid had 42 points and 13 rebounds for Philadelphia. Simmons scored 24.

"That's a win we've got to get," Simmons said.

Sexton hit a 3 late in regulation that put the Cavs ahead 92-90, but Embiid answered with a tying dunk. The score went back-and-forth all quarter and the Cavs had a chance to win late. Sexton missed a long 3 coming out of a timeout and Matisse Thybulle grabbed the defensive rebound. Embiid missed a step-back 15-footer with one second left and the game went into OT tied 92-all.

Embiid, who seems good for one injury scare a game, sure enough came up limping late in the first quarter. He stayed in the game after a timeout and promptly passed out of a double team to Danny Green for a 3.

Embiid's ability to draw fouls — he's been accused of flopping — at an elite level continued against the Cavs. Embiid let out an "ahhh!" as he tangled with JaVale McGee and went to the line. McGee was whistled for three fouls in 1 minute that led to four made free throws by Embiid, and Jarrett Allen also had three fouls by halftime. Embiid was 11 of 12 from the line in the half; the Cavs just 10 of 13.

Sixers coach Doc Rivers yelled, "Wake up! Let's go!" with the Sixers down 39-30. The Sixers needed time to snap out of their slumber.

"We were running our offense like it was a walk-through," Rivers said.

Embiid and Simmons carried the Sixers in the first half and combined to score 33 of their 47 points. The other three starters scored just seven points and the Cavs led 56-47 at the break.

The Cavaliers ran and ran after Sixers' misses and scored 17 fast-break points in the half.

The Sixers shook off a 13-point hole and got rolling in the third, in large part because Embiid and Simmons had help from the bench. Mike Scott hit a 3 that pulled them within one. Shake Milton hit the floater that tied it at 65.

The Cavs pushed the pace and shut down every Sixer outside of Embiid and Simmons to get a win they hope will prove better days are ahead.

"Are we there yet? No, we're not finished," Bickerstaff said. "But we've got to continue to answer the bell when tested."

AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' Collin Sexton reacts after a basket during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Philadelphia 76ers, Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021, in Philadelphia.

Mavericks 115, Nets 98

In New York, Luka Doncic scored 27 points, Kristaps Porzingis added 18 in his return from injury and the Dallas Mavericks snapped the Brooklyn Nets' eight-game winning streak with a 115-98 victory Saturday night.

James Harden had 29 points for the Nets, but only four after halftime while playing as Brooklyn's solo superstar. Kevin Durant missed his seventh straight game with a left hamstring strain and Kyrie Irving rested his surgically repaired right shoulder.

That took more than 56 points per game away from the NBA's highest-scoring team and Brooklyn couldn't keep up with a Dallas club that shot 52% from the field.

Porzingis missed last three games with lower back tightness and shook off his rust after halftime to help Dallas break open the game.

Jalen Brunson scored 14 points for the Mavericks, who split games against the East's top teams after losing at Philadelphia on Thursday, when they committed a season-high 22 turnovers. They had only nine Saturday.

Jazz 124, Magic 109

In Orlando, Fla., Donovan Mitchell scored 31 points and Joe Ingles filled in well again at point guard in place of Mike Conley to help Utah beat Orlando.

Utah bounced back from a loss a night earlier in Miami, improving to 6-1 following a defeat. The NBA-leading Jazz have lost consecutive games just once all season and not since Jan. 6 when they were 4-4.

Ingles had 17 points, six assists and three 3-pointers. The Jazz are 7-0 this season when he starts at point guard in place of Conley, who was out with right hamstring injury management.

Magic All-Star center Nikola Vucevic scored 34 points.

Wizards 128, Timberwolves 112

In Washington, Bradley Beal scored 34 points, Russell Westbrook added 19 as part of his NBA-leading 10th triple-double, and Washington used a 44-point third quarter to beat Minnesota.

Westbrook added 14 rebounds and 12 assists for the Wizards. They've won seven of eight to move back into playoff contention following a 6-17 start.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 23 points and 11 rebounds for NBA-worst Minnesota. The Timberwolves have lost seven in a row.

Nuggets 126, Thunder 86

In Oklahoma City, Jamal Murray continued his hot scoring with 26 points and Nikola Jokic had his eighth triple-double of the season to help Denver rout Oklahoma City.

Murray, averaging 30.1 points in his previous seven games, made 9 of 15 field goals and Denver shot 55%. Jokic had 19 points, 11 rebounds and 13 assists. Michael Porter Jr. added 20 points and 10 rebounds, and Will Barton scored 15 points.

Darius Bazley had 22 points for the Thunder. Ty Jerome and Isaiah Roby added 15 each.

Spurs 117, Pelicans 114

In San Antonio, DeMar DeRozan had 32 points and 11 assists and short-handed San Antonio held on to beat New Orleans.

LaMarcus Aldridge added 21 points off the bench in his second game back after missing six games because of a sore right hip.

Brandon Ingram had 29 points and Zion Williamson added 23 points and 14 rebounds for New Orleans. The Pelicans have lost two straight and seven of 10.

Knicks 110, Pacers 107

In New York, Julius Randle had 28 points and 10 rebounds and New York beat Indiana get back to .500 at 17-17.

RJ Barrett added 24 points for New York. Derrick Rose had 17 points and Immanuel Quickley 10 as the Knicks reached the .500 mark for the first time since they were 8-8 on Jan. 21.

Doug McDermott had 20 points for Indiana. The Pacers have lost three straight.

Warriors G League's Jeremy Lin experienced racism on court

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Warriors G League guard Jeremy Lin shared on social media that he experienced an act of racism on the court.

Golden State coach Steve Kerr said he will support Lin and denounced any discriminatory act that caused Lin to speak out about racism targeting Asian Americans.

In a heartfelt social media post, Lin didn't go into specific details about what happened except to reference he had been called "coronavirus" on the court—without saying when or where this happened. Kerr said it was brought to his attention Friday night that Lin had expressed his dismay publicly.

Lin—the first American-born player of Chinese or Taiwanese descent in the NBA—and his team are playing at the neutral G League bubble venue in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

"Being an Asian American doesn't mean we don't experience poverty and racism. Being a 9-year NBA veteran doesn't protect me from being called 'coronavirus' on the court," Lin wrote. "Being a man of faith doesn't mean I don't fight for justice, for myself and for others. So here we are again, sharing how we feel. Is anyone listening?"

Kerr wasn't sure how he would proceed until he gathered more information, but vowed to support Lin. The 32-year-old Lin played 29 games for the Warriors as a rookie in 2010-11, then went to the New York Knicks and gained the popularity that spawned the nickname "Linsanity." A Taiwanese American, Lin was born in the Southern California city of Torrance but grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area.

"Really powerful. I applaud Jeremy for his words and echo his sentiments regarding racism against the Asian-American community," Kerr said before Golden State hosted Charlotte at Chase Center. "It's just so ridiculous and obviously spawned by many people, including our former president, as it relates to the coronavirus originating in China. It's just shocking. I can't wrap my head around any of it, but I can't wrap my head around racism in general.

"We're all just flesh and blood. We're all just people. As (Gregg) Pop (Popovich) once said to me, `We're all accidents of birth. We're born. We come out the way we are. We don't have a say in it. What we do have a say in is how we treat people.' It's shocking to me that we can treat each other so poorly based on the color of skin or whatever it is. So I applaud Jeremy for speaking up."

Lin also wrote on his Facebook page:

"Something is changing in this generation of Asian Americans. We are tired of being told that we don't experience racism, we are tired of being told to keep our heads down and not make trouble. We are tired of Asian American kids growing up and being asked where they're REALLY from, of having our eyes mocked, of being objectified as exotic or being told we're inherently unattractive. We are tired of the stereotypes in Hollywood affecting our psyche and limiting who we think we can be. We are tired of being invisible, of being mistaken for our colleague or told our struggles aren't as real.

"I want better for my elders who worked so hard and sacrificed so much to make a life for themselves here. I want better for my niece and nephew and future kids. I want better for the next generation of Asian American athletes than to have to work so hard to just be 'deceptively athletic.'"

Weir leads by 2 at Cologuard Classic, Mickelson 9 back

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—Mike Weir went on a back-nine birdie binge to take control of the Cologuard Classic.

Phil Mickelson waded into the mud for the second straight day and will have to dig out of a deep hole if he's going to make history. Weir shot a 5-under 67 to build a two-shot lead in the Cologuard Classic on Saturday, leaving Mickelson with a lot of ground to make up to win his third straight PGA Tour Champions start.

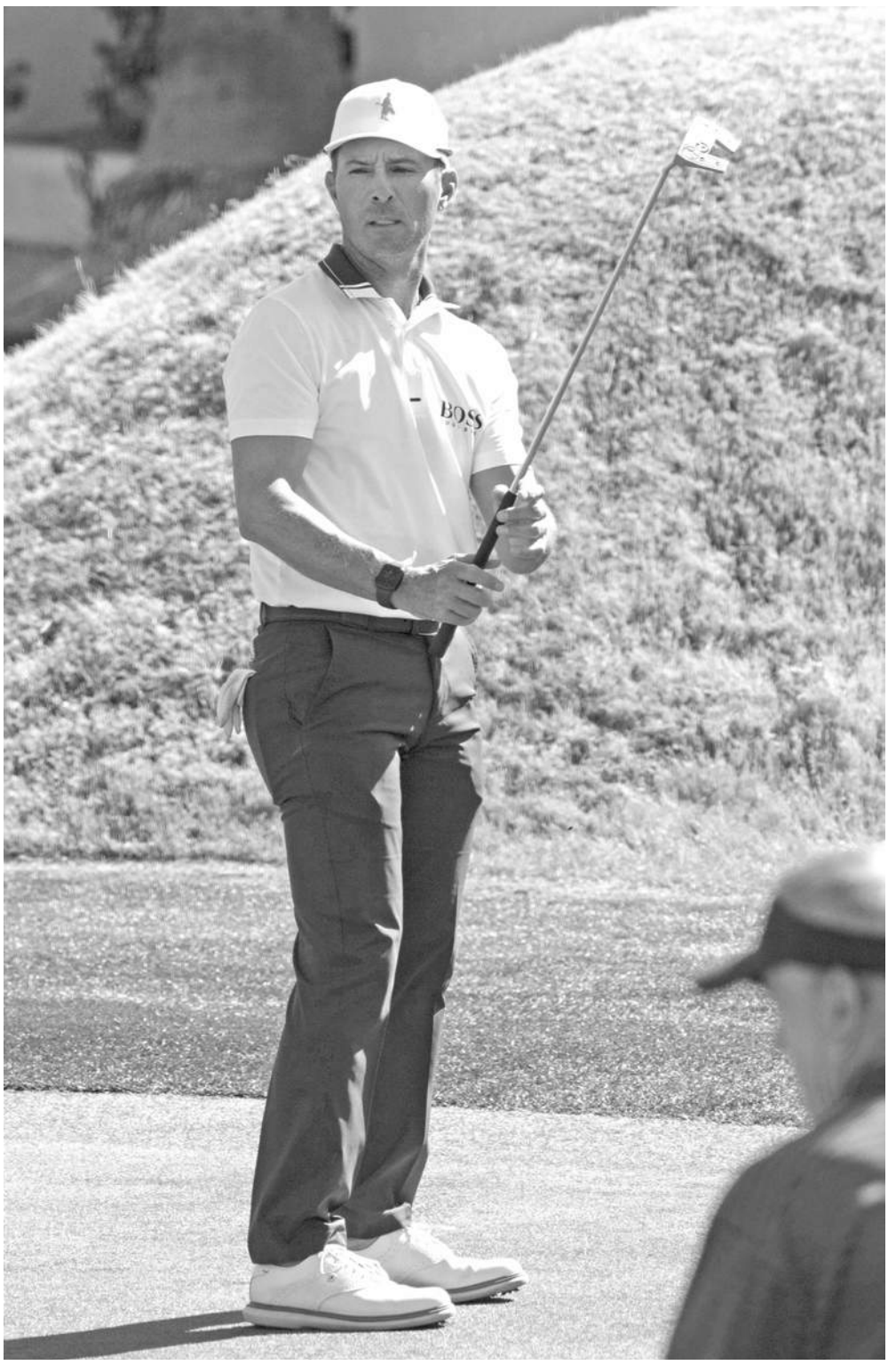
"I can't recall a time where I've hit so many shots close to the hole," Weir said. "I've hit really a lot of shots that have been almost tap-in to just outside of tap-in. My wedges have been very good, even mid iron game's been very good, and I'm driving it good."

Weir shot 66 in the opening round and had eight birdies in breezy conditions at tricky Tucson National. The Canadian left-hander was at 13 under, with Kevin Sutherland second heading into the final round.

Tim Petrovic became the second player in PGA Tour Champions history to have a hole-in-one in consecutive rounds with an ace on No. 14. He was 8 under after a 67.

Mickelson is bidding to become the first player to win his first three career starts on a PGA Tour-sanctioned tour. The five-time major champion was nine shots back after a 72 that included a second straight day of hitting out of the mud on No. 15.

Mickelson was the last amateur to win a PGA Tour event as 20-year-old in Tucson 30 years ago, but has burned the edges of holes through two days in his return.



AP

Mike Weir watches hit putt on the 9th green during the second round of the 2021 Cologuard Classic golf tournament at the Omni Tucson National Resort on Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021.

"I really don't know what to say other than it just was fractionally off the whole time," he said. "I thought I hit a lot of good shots that just weren't ending up close and I just wasn't able to score. I scored terribly today, obviously, and relative to how I play."

Lefty hit into the large wash dissecting the course for the second straight day, pulling a drive on the par-5 second after doing the same on No. 13 Friday. He had a stretch of three birdies in four holes after the double bogey on No. 2 and another on the par-5 12th when he got up and down from a greenside bunker.

Mickelson hit out of the mud on the par-5 15th in Friday's opening round after a 5-iron rolled farther than he expected and trickled into the pond on the dogleg right. He hit driver in the second round and ended up with the same result when his ball landed on the fairway and caromed hard right.

Mickelson left his shoes on for his mud shot in Friday's round and made a 4-foot birdie putt after slopping it out. He opted to take his shoes off for his second muddy go-round and had another birdie chance despite spraying himself with mud, only to watch the putt slide by the hole.

"I'm doing something wrong, so I've got to fix that," he said. "I don't know what to say. I hit two really good shots that have both ended up in the water. I can easily play more left, but then I can't get there. Then I can't get that second shot there and I'm trying to make a 4."

Weir shot 1-under 35 on the front nine before going on a birdie binge. The 2003 Masters champion ran off a string of seven birdies in eight holes to start the back nine, but a pulled approach shot on the par-4 18th led to a bogey.

Petrovic had an ace on No. 16 in the opening round and pulled off rare consecutive-day aces on the 186-yard 14th Saturday. Petrovic raised his hands in the air as the handful of fans cheered, then curled up into a fetal position on the tee box after watching another improbable ace.

The only other PGA Tour Champions player with aces in consecutive rounds was Graham Marsh at the 2004 Senior British Open.

"I heard someone say, "Go in," and I'm like, `No, it can't —there's no way, I just had one yesterday, and it's been six years since I had the one before that,'" Petrovic said. "I just flopped on the ground and then I kind of got in the fetal position. That's all I could do."

Sutherland had four birdies and eagled the par-5 17th to shoot a bogey-free 67.

Scott Parel was three shots off the lead after a bogey-free 67 that included five birdies.

LA sheriff calls Tiger Woods crash 'purely an accident'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Los Angeles County sheriff on Wednesday characterized the crash that seriously injured Tiger Woods as "purely an accident" and appeared to rule out any potential criminal charges even as authorities were still investigating.

Deputies saw no evidence the golf star was impaired by drugs or alcohol after Tuesday's rollover wreck on a downhill stretch of road known for crashes, Sheriff Alex Villanueva said.

"He was not drunk," Villanueva said during a livestreamed social media event. "We can throw that one out."

Woods, who had checked into a clinic in 2017 for help dealing with prescription medication, was driving alone through coastal Los Angeles suburbs when his SUV struck a raised median, crossed into oncoming lanes and flipped several times. The crash caused "significant" injuries to his right leg that required surgery, according to a post on the golfer's Twitter account.

Deputy Carlos Gonzalez, who was first to arrive at the crash, patrols the road and said he sometimes catches people topping 80 mph (129 kph) in the downhill, 45-mph zone and that wrecks are common.

Justin King, a personal injury attorney in California, said that if investigators prove the road is unsafe and contributed to Woods' crash and others, the municipality that controls it could be held liable. The wreck happened on the border between the communities of Rolling Hills Estates and Rancho Palos Verdes, and the county supervisor who represents the area has requested a safety review.

Meanwhile, Villanueva said investigators may seek search warrants for a blood sample to definitively rule out drugs and alcohol. Detectives also could apply for search warrants for Woods' cellphone to see if he was driving distracted, as well as the vehicle's event data recorder, or "black box," which would give information about how fast he was going.

Wood

Joe Giacalone, a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a retired New York police sergeant, said it was "premature" for Villanueva to determine the crash was an accident just a day later.

"The blood test could give us a whole other insight," Giacalone said, noting that some drugs are not necessarily detectable by observation. "Because it's Tiger Woods, people are going to demand answers. You have to dot your I's and cross your T's."

Crash investigations typically include interviews of first responders and bystanders as well as inspections of the road and the vehicle, including photographing and measuring the scene and checking to see if the vehicle had defects or malfunctions, according to William Peppard, a retired Bergen County, New Jersey, police detective who has served as a crash investigator.

Peppard said in typical cases with no immediate indications the driver was impaired, detectives might not seek blood samples if the crash did not injure anyone else or damage property.

"Take the celebrity out of it — it's a matter of resources and time," he said.

In 2017, Woods was arrested on a DUI charge when Florida police found him asleep behind the wheel of his car parked awkwardly on the side of the road, with its engine still running, two flat tires and a blinker flashing.

Woods said he had an unexpected reaction to pain medication. He eventually pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of reckless driving. Three weeks after the arrest, he entered a clinic for help dealing with prescription medication and a sleep disorder.

The crash this week was the latest setback for Woods, who at times has looked unstoppable with his 15 major championships and record-tying 82 victories on the PGA Tour. He is among the world's most recognizable sports figures, and at 45, with a reduced schedule from nine previous surgeries, remains golf's biggest draw.

Injuries, however, have been a big part of his narrative dating to his epic victory in the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines, where he won with shredded knee ligaments and two stress fractures in his left leg.

In 2009, his personal life imploded when he was caught having multiple extramarital affairs and crashed his vehicle into a fire hydrant and tree. He went two years without winning.

After returning to No. 1 in the world in 2013, when he won five times and was PGA Tour player of the year for the 11th time, he had his first back surgery in 2014. He played only 16 times over the next four years.

But he always made it back. Even after four back surgeries, he won the Masters in April 2019 for the fifth time, which ranks among the great comebacks in the sport.

Woods had a fifth back surgery, a microdiscectomy, on Dec. 23, just three days after he played the PNC Championship with his son Charlie, now 12.

He was in Los Angeles over the weekend as the tournament host of the Genesis Invitational at Riviera Country Club. Monday and Tuesday had been set aside for him to give golf tips to celebrities on Discovery-owned GOLFTV.

Pujols says he'll decide future after season with Angels

AP
In this Sept. 12, 2020, file photo, Los Angeles Angels designated hitter Albert Pujols waves to players in the Colorado Rockies dugout in the second inning of a baseball game in Denver.

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Albert Pujols woke up from a nap last Monday in Arizona to find several hundred messages and missed calls on his phone.

While he was sleeping, the Los Angeles Angels slugger's wife, Deidre, had put up a complimentary Instagram post about her husband that was widely interpreted to mean Pujols had decided to retire after this season, his 21st in the majors.

"Hey, that's the life we're living on social media," Pujols said Saturday with a chuckle. "It's sad that everybody just had to run with it."

The 41-year-old slugger quickly reiterated what he has been saying for months: He hasn't decided whether he will continue playing after the conclusion of his 10-year, $240 million contract with the Angels this fall, and he won't make or announce a decision until after the season.

"I think our organization, my friends, people that follow my career for 21 years deserve better than just me or her posting something on Instagram," Pujols said in his first interviews of spring training. "This thing just got blown out of proportion. My mind is not even there. My mind is on staying focused, healthy, and hopefully trying to help this ballclub win this year, and that's it. If I feel at the end of the year that that's it, I'll announce it (and) go home. But I'm not even there yet."

The fifth-leading home run hitter in major league history says he has more pressing concerns on his mind, primarily the chase of his first playoff victory with the Angels. Not playing in October will never stop grating on Pujols, who begins the new season with 662 homers along with 2,100 RBIs, third-most in baseball history.

"I don't even get to watch (the postseason), because I get so mad because we should have been there," he said.

Pujols has at least one more chance to get the team success he craves alongside Mike Trout, Anthony Rendon and Shohei Ohtani. The 10-time All-Star is in the midst of five consecutive losing seasons and six straight non-playoff campaigns with the Angels, but there is cautious optimism around the big-budget franchise heading into manager Joe Maddon's second season in charge.

Even if Pujols attempts to play in 2022, he knows he is close to the end of the underwhelming second act of his career after 11 stellar seasons in St. Louis. He batted .328 with 445 homers while winning three NL MVP awards for the Cardinals, but has been a .257 hitter with 217 homers over nine years in Anaheim.

Last season, Pujols batted .224 with a .665 OPS — both the worst marks of his two-decade career — while playing in just 39 of Los Angeles' 60 games.

This season also brings the distinct prospect of even less action for Pujols, who has remained injury-free and fairly effective as a fielder at first base over the past two years.

He's certain to split playing time at first with Jared Walsh, who batted .337 with nine homers and 26 RBIs in 22 games as a rookie last September, and with Ohtani as the Halos' designated hitter.

Pujols says he's fine with whatever role he gets in 2021 from Maddon, who praises the veteran slugger for his maturity and leadership.

"It's going to be a meritocracy always, and he gets it," Maddon said. "We've had the conversations. Of course he wants to play. Of course when he doesn't play, he might not like it. He's wired that way, and that's how you want him to be. But he understands what's going on. He accepts it well. Regardless of the role we put him in, I know he's going to react to it well."

LeMahieu, Yankees looking forward to fans in stands again

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—DJ LeMahieu and the New York Yankees are happy there will be a little bit of baseball normalcy when spring training games begin on Sunday.

As in, fans in the stands when the Yankees host the Toronto Blue Jays at Steinbrenner Field.

Due to restrictions brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, it will be the first time fans will see the Yankees play in-person since a spring training game last March 12.

"To me it's just Major League Baseball with fans," LeMahieu said on Saturday. "Last year I'm glad we played. Glad we were able to get in as many games as we could and I thought the playoffs was cool but just missed that adrenaline and excitement."

The limited crowd due to safety protocols for Sunday's game is expected to be around 2,800 in the ballpark that has a capacity of over 10,000.

"You can definitely tell how excited people are to go to baseball games, especially to watch the Yankees and that's what I'm excited about," LeMahieu said. "I enjoy the game but I know how much it means to a lot of fans to watch the Yankees and baseball."

Social distancing and mask wearing rules are in place and there will be no close interaction between players and fans like signing autographs.

"I definitely miss that," said LeMahieu, who led the majors in batting last year. "It's not always my favorite thing to do but I know how much it means. It's something I look forward to. Hopefully that kind of interaction returns."

The Blue Jays will also be playing before fans for the first time in almost a year.

"In just watching other events, whether it was college football, NFL games, different games where fans were there in limited capacities, it does change the look and the feel even watching it on TV I felt like," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "I'm sure it will be nice for the guys to have that environment and atmosphere that only the fans can create."

Boone said the first time the lack of fans last year really hit him hard was the initial series with the Boston Red Sox.

"Where there's just that normal extra buzz, angst and intensity in a regular-season setting," Boone said.

CHAVEZ

From Page 20

ered a distance of 5 kilometers in the first run, a 1-km swim, and 2.5 kms in the final run.

The 5K run of the aquthlon started from PauPau to Ayuyu Drive and back followed by the 1K swim in PauPau beach water and to conclude the course, a 2.5K run from PauPau to Mariana Resort rotunda and back.

A total of 27 individuals joined the aquathlon portion of the event.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Runners begin the course in the 6th Saipan Aquathlon and 10K Run last Saturday at PauPau Beach, Marpi.

MCS

From Page 20

itself in the losers bracket by besting SIS 2 a second time to face off with MCS 2. GCA went against MHS 1 for the last seat in the championship bracket and prevailed.

The 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League boys champion MCS Knights is composed of Richard Steele, Merrick Toves, Jeremiah Diaz, Brandon Lee, Jun Beom Kim, and Sam Ryu. The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association helped organize the tournament.

Sexton, Garland help Cavaliers upset 76ers in OT

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Weir leads by 2 at Cologuard Classic, Mickelson 9 back

PAGE 18

MCS Knights rule beach v-ball

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Mount Carmel School Knights struggled but ultimately prevailed over the Grace Christian Academy Eagles to take home the boys championship of the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4x4 Beach Volleyball League at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand court over the weekend.

Last Saturday, GCA put up a gallant fight against tournament top seed MCS 1, winning an easy first set. However, MCS 1, who had a twice-to-beat advantage, came from behind and swept the last two sets, preventing GCA from extending to a deciding second game.

GCA won the first set with an easy 21-16 win, but MCS 1 regained momentum in the second set by beating GCA, 21-15.

In the tie-breaking set, GCA gave MCS 1 a run for its money, with the Knights and the Eagles coming to a tie, 12-12.

GCA broke the tie with a block at the net but the Knights persevered coming neck-and-neck at a 14-14 tie.

This time, MCS 1 broke out of the tie when GCA failed to return the ball. MCS 1 continued to trudge forward and won over GCA 16-14 after GCA hit the ball out of bounds.

MCS Knights volleyball coach Randy Steele said he knew GCA would give MCS a tough game as their only loss throughout the tournament was when they came head-to-head with GCA.

"GCA is a great opponent I knew they'd give us a tough game. I'm not surprised that our only loss in the tournament was to them, they have some really great players and they have a really good volleyball program. It was a wonderful tournament," he said.

MCS 1 took the top seed throughout the two-day tournament to take the twice-to-beat advantage in the finals opposite GCA.

MCS 1 bested Marianas High School 2, MCS 2, then faced off with MHS 1 for the first seat in the championship round.

GCA came out on top against Saipan International School 2 before losing to MHS 1.

However, GCA redeemed

See MCS on Page 19

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA
Mount Carmel School Knights boys volleyball team poses for a photo after winning the championship title in the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball last Saturday.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA
Mount Carmel School's Merrick Toves spikes the ball during the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball last Saturday.

Chavez tops 6th Saipan Aquathlon again

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez came out on top in the female division of the aquathlon portion in the 6th Saipan Aquathlon and 10K Run held last Saturday at the PauPau Beach in Marpi.

Mount Carmel School's Chavez, who is no stranger to the run-swim-run portion of the event, dashed through the course and finished first in the women's division of the aquathlon—a combination of swim and a run race—with an impressive finishing time of 1:07:53.

It's Chavez's second victory in the aquathlon after also topping the same event with a time of 51:34 in 2018.

Coming at a close second was Denise Meyers, finishing the course just a minute behind Chavez with a time of 1:08:31. Meyers was closely followed by Kerri Baur who completed the Top 3 after coming in at 1:09:44.

In the male division of the aquathlon, Shuji Kuroda was the first to complete the course submitting a time of 56:19. Kuroda sped through the event and completed the course with the fastest time.

Trailing close behind was Isaiah Aleksenko who finished less than a minute after Kuroda at 57:22. Rounding up the Top 3 in the male division of the aquathlon was Whitney Altizer who finished at 1:00:37.

The 6th Saipan Aquathlon and 10K Run is the Triathlon Association of the CNMI's first event for the 2021 season.

The aquathlon event cov-

See CHAVEZ on Page

Kuroda

Chavez